

High Ideals

THE LUTHER LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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High Ideals

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COVER PICTURE

DISCUSSING ARTWORK OF AN ENTRY IN A REFORMATION POSTER CONTEST HELD AMONG LEAGUES IN LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY, ARE RUTH ALSIP, TOM CRAWFORD, AND PETER SETZER, LEAGUERS OF MEMORIAL LUTHERAN CHURCH. POSTERS, DEPICTING AN EVENT IN THE LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER, PUBLICIZED A CITY-WIDE REFORMATION SERVICE LAST YEAR.

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Idea Counter

THE *Idea Counter* is reversing itself, for just this one issue. Instead of our passing along ideas, suggestions, and methods to you, you have a chance to give them to us. You can tell us what you like in program materials and why you like it.

HIGH IDEALS has been the victim of growing pains for the last several months. Probably you've already noticed them.

One difference of emphasis comes in the way in which the topics are being written. The usual style has been to present an article interesting to read, then tell the reader how to adapt the article for a program. The articles entitled "How to Be Popular" and "Parents Can Be Problems" in this issue are written after this pattern.

Now another kind of topic is being emphasized in HIGH IDEALS. It is a rather complete program guide. Step-by-step the writer tells you how to develop the idea, or subject, as a program. The topics in

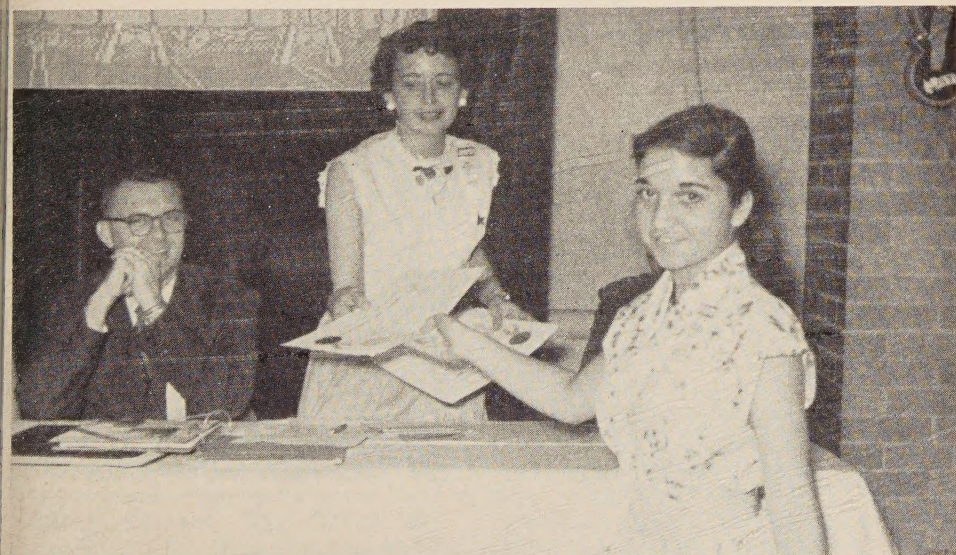
this issue entitled "The Man Who Lost His Head," "Everybody's Looking at Me," and "Cups of Cold Water" are examples of this type of material. Several other topics are a mixture of the two methods.

Some groups that are experienced in planning, and whose counsellors are skilled in working out programs with a group, will probably find the first type preferable for its needs. But others, not so well versed in getting programs ready, might prefer the second method, with a more detailed program guide.

No matter how much theory is developed on why a certain technique should be more beneficial to a Luther League, the test is still how the style works in your league.

If you will answer the questions on the next page, we will know what you need, and which topic method is more useful to your group.

Marie McGuigan accepts efficiency award for her intermediate league at Holy Trinity, Bellerose, N. Y., from Mildred Skandera. LLA Executive Secretary Conrad looks on.



You can help edit HIGH IDEALS by writing your answer to the questions below. Then mail the sheet and your comments to HIGH IDEALS, 1228 Spruce Street, Room 825, Philadelphia 7, Pennsylvania. Before writing your answer, read page 1.

1. Which type of topic is best for your program planning: —Article and direction, or —Step-by-step program guide.
2. Your leaguers find the topics in this issue of HIGH IDEALS
 - Over their heads
 - At their level of thinking
 - Below their level of thinking
3. Your leaguers find the vocabulary in HIGH IDEALS
 - Too difficult
 - Satisfactory
 - Too easy
4. The material in each topic in this fall issue of HIGH IDEALS is
 - More than enough
 - Enough
 - Too short for program planning

Average number of leaguers attending your devotional meeting —.

Average age of your leaguers using the materials in HIGH IDEALS is —.

Check whether you are a —leaguer; —league counsellor; —pastor.

State or province in which you live —.

YOUR COMMENTS: _____

BE A PEN PAL

These teen-agers would like to write to other Luther leaguers. Would you like to be a pen pal? Write to one of them, or send your name, address, age, league, and list of interests or hobbies to "Pen Pal Page" in care of HIGH IDEALS, Luther League of America, 1228 Spruce Street, Philadelphia 7, Pa.

SARITA NIEVES, 0-7 Falansterio, Puerta de Tierra, Puerto Rico. Age: 16. Member St. Paul's "L. M. Reese" Luther League. Hobbies: Pen pals, writing, reading, music, sports.

HAROLD LINDBERG, 3327 Madison Ave., Brookfield, Illinois. Age: 16. Interests: Sports, music, reading, pen pals, and league work.

JAMES WARREN DOWNS, P.O. Box 47, Eldridge, Iowa. Age: 15. Member Faith Church. Hobbies: Sports, music, reading, raising fish, Luther League, and choir.

NELLIE MARIE JONES, Route 2, Clear Spring, Maryland. Age: 15. Interests: Luther League, dancing, skating, pen pals, collecting post cards, reading, and sports.

BETTY JOE BRUNS, 1527 St. Joseph, Missouri. Age: 12. Member First English Church Luther League. Interests: Rink skating, Camp Wa-shu-ga, church work, and Luther League.

GEORGE MCEACHERN, R.F.D. No. 1, Concord, N. C. Member Mt. Hermon Church. Age: 14. Interests: Hiking, swimming, photography, sports, and skating.

CAROL FAGGART, Route 13, Box 561, Concord, N. C. Age: 13. Interests: Church work, sports, pen pals, and collecting pictures of movie stars.

SANDRA MARTIN, 905 O'Neal St., Newberry, S. C. Age: 13. Interests:

Swimming, piano, badminton, reading, and dancing.

CHARLENE GOLDEN, 915 McKibben St., Newberry, S. C. Age: 12. Member Mayer Memorial Luther League. Interests: Reading, dancing, music, swimming, and badminton.

SHIRLEY MAYER, 1101 Johnstone St., Newberry, S. C. Age: 15. Member Mayer Memorial Luther League. Hobbies: Badminton, reading, skating, and caring for young children.

LOISE SEASE, Box 160, Gilbert, S. C. Age: 16. Member St. Paul Luther League. Interests: Square dancing, collecting post cards, pen pals, and sports.

ANNE LANGFORD, Blythewood, S. C. Age: 13. Member St. Mark's Church. Hobbies: Pen pals, swimming, dancing, and collecting records.

CAROLE HAWK, 218 Market St., Lykens, Penna. Age: 16. Member Zion Luther League. Interests: Luther League, pen pals, dancing, roller skating, keeping house, piano, and swimming.

BARBARA KELLER, 800 London St., Menasha, Wisc. Age: 15. Hobbies: Skating, swimming music.

JOAN JACOBSON, 836 7th St., Menasha, Wisc. Age: 14. Interests: Sports.

ELEANOR BODENHAMER, Box 63, Rural Hall, N. C. Age: 12. Interests: Swimming, dancing, singing, ping-pong, Luther League, and jazz music.

Cups of Cold Water

A blind baby is orphaned. How does the church help? Nine children and their mother have no food, ragged clothes, little money. How will the church aid them to get on their feet again?

By Eleanor Jamieson

LEADER: You've just heard that Christ said, "And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward." Maybe you are thinking that the church ought to do something to follow that command by helping the sick, the discouraged, or the handicapped. Actually the church gives a lot of aid to all sorts of people who need it.

Have you ever heard of inner mission work? In this kind of service church workers assist people who are in prison, families who are poor, the sick, the aged, and the immigrants. This service is done right here in the United States and Canada—practically in your own back yard. The men and women who carry on this work for the church have Christ as their example and inspiration. They are obeying his command to serve the less fortunate.

But, let's see for ourselves how the

church serves people through its inner missions. Let's watch some real life scenes that social workers face again and again each day. As we view the scenes, notice how the workers care for the bodily needs of people—how they offer the cup of cold water in several ways—and how they also feed the spirits of these people.

A cup—to children

SCENE 1. *A group of nine children and their mother are seated around a table. The furniture is battered and old. Empty dishes are on the table. The family is shabbily dressed.*

FIRST READER reads Mark 9:32-37

FIRST NARRATOR: This is a pretty large family. With so many brothers and sisters you would think they have lots of fun. Think of sharing Christmas together—and borrowing one another's clothes or toys. What a warm, close feeling there must have when they go off together for a picnic, or when they watch TV at home.

But take a second look. No TV. Hardly any furniture, in fact. No Dad. Mom

erry things had to work out the way they d. She loves her children, but she feels tired and discouraged at times. Little wonder. You can't eat when there's no money to buy food. You need more than warm words to make patched clothes keep small bodies snug against cold weather. Jimmy needs a doctor badly. It's pretty tough to be happy when you live in a shabby, overcrowded house where there's no heat and the windows have no glass.

Mom's been told to see her pastor, but she hasn't gone. After all what could he do besides preach a sermon on the results of sin. He wouldn't be interested in her family.

But, wait, the pastor is interested. And here's what will happen. He will visit the family and offer help. Then a worker from the Children's Bureau of the church will come to see Mom and the nine children. Together they will work out a plan. Some of the children will be placed in carefully selected foster homes to live, until Mom is able to get back on her feet and care for them in her own home. The foster homes substitute parents will give the children as much love and care as any real parent would. Mom and the worker from the Children's Bureau will visit the children regularly.

Then the city's Department of Public Assistance helps Mom tide things over with money. Jimmy and his brothers and sisters are given physical examinations and the medical treatment they need to put energy back into their young bodies. The big goal of the worker from the Children's Bureau is to see that the family eventually stays together both physically and spiritually.

As time goes on Mom learns a lot. It seems that people do care. Workers from the church's inner mission help because they want to do just what Christ told them to do—with no strings attached. Through them Mom is convinced that Christ has the answer to some of her family's needs. And she is finding out about him and why people act so different when they know him. One of her goals is to have her children baptized and

Your program plans

One of the best features of this program is that you can produce it whether your league is small or large. It is easily adjusted, and every leaguer may take part, if you desire. For instance, each scene could bring a different narrator, Bible reader, and characters from the one before. Or one narrator, one Bible reader, and the same actors could present the whole drama.

The settings can be as elaborate as time, space, and the participation of your leaguers permit. Above all, be enthusiastic and your intermediates will enjoy taking part. Be sure you know what is meant by foster homes, inner missions, Children's Bureau, and social worker.

To add interest and color you may wish to display several pictures showing Jesus' work as described in the Bible passages for each scene.

Your leaguers will want to have a share in the work of inner missions. Several suggestions are listed at the end of the program for your careful consideration. One caution: Visits or outings should be carefully planned and cleared through the proper persons.

confirmed. And Mom's a regular churchgoer now.

(End of scene. Players take seats with the audience.)

Of course, children are helped in many ways through the inner mission. For instance, if youngsters do not have a home, or if they are not placed with foster parents, they are cared for in children's homes. Workers from the Children's Bureau keep in close touch with these youngsters until they are ready to try their own wings.

Settlement houses, run by our church, work with people, too. The settlement house is usually located in a slum or a

run-down area of a city. People who live close by come to the house for many activities like cooking, handicrafts, dancing, sewing, and clubs.

Sister Betty, a deaconess, works in a settlement house in a large city. She's learned how to cope with many a tough-looking, defiant teen-ager. Through patience, understanding, and skill she has won the confidence of many youth and guided them in solving some of their problems.

A cup—to the handicapped

SCENE 2. *Inner mission worker is in a private home. She is talking to a mother who holds a baby (a doll).*

SECOND READER reads Mark 10:46-52

SECOND NARRATOR: Perhaps you have heard of some mothers who have grown terribly discouraged when things have not gone right for their children. Some become so frightened that they abandon their small children. That's what happened to this baby. He was born blind. His mother did not know what to do—how to take care of him—so she deserted him.

Fortunately, a worker in the Children's Bureau was able to help. The Bureau gave the baby to a woman who loved children but who had none of her own. To aid the small child more skillfully, the woman went to special classes where she learned how to teach her blind baby.

Meantime the Children's Bureau kept in close contact with the eye department of a local hospital to see how the child could be treated. They hoped that some day with medical care this baby would see.

(End of scene.)

Work is done by our church not only among the blind, but also with the deaf-mutes in homes, congregations, and in institutions.

A cup—to the sick

SCENE 3. *Hospital ward. A pastor is seated beside an elderly woman in a wheel chair. A social worker stands behind the pastor.*

THIRD READER reads Matthew 4:23-25

THIRD NARRATOR: Did you ever think

how "Johnny-on-the-spot" your pastor is? You see him during church service in church school, in Luther League, and during social get-togethers. How would you feel if you were cut off from your pastor? Like this elderly lady, for instance. She's in a hospital far from home and friends. Next Thursday she will have an operation—and she's worried.

But, look! See another Lutheran pastor talking to her. His job is to visit patients in hospitals each week. He will ease her mind about the operation. And together they will ask God for his comfort and presence. The pastor will administer communion. He also cheers the patient up by bringing news from her own pastor in her church back home.

When this lady finally goes home she will realize that her hospital stay was a blessing in many ways. Most of all, she knows that God cares about her.

Notice the social worker behind the pastor. She and this visiting pastor have worked together in many ways. One woman, for instance, suffered from crippling arthritis. She wanted to enter a home where she would be given the right kind of care. But the home cost money. Oh yes, she had saved some—but she needed \$700 more.

The social worker and the pastor did all they could to raise the money. They asked the hospital staff to help. It was Lent. Nurses in the hospital saved the money they would have spent for candy and the movies. By Easter they had collected \$100 for this patient. Through their efforts, and the efforts of others, the lady was admitted to a nursing home.

(End of scene.)

You've seen the team work of pastor, doctors, social workers, and nurses. Have you noticed that there's much more assisting people than giving out medicine or cutting out a ruptured appendix? A pastor helps the patient to keep his faith, by planning for care after leaving the hospital. Sometimes his job will lead to find a nursing home for a patient—sometimes he must buy a certain kind of shoe for another patient.

The pastor who serves the hospitals also carries on pastoral duties for the doctors and nurses. These people sometimes drop away from the church because they no longer live in their home towns. So the pastor instructs them in catechism, holds worship services, counsels, and advises them of churches near the hospital that would welcome them. In fact, the hospital pastor has influenced some nurses to work in foreign mission fields.

The pastor who visits hospitals, prisons, homes for the aged, or children's homes is often the Church to the people he sees. They have no other way of getting to worship. Let's look at our next scene.

A cup—to those in prison

SCENE 4. *A man is seated at a table in a prison cell. Window over his head is barred. (This window may be drawn on paper and attached to the wall.)*

FOURTH READER reads Matthew 25:31-40

FOURTH NARRATOR: Here's a man who looks like he's doing his homework. But say, what kind of school is he going to? See the bars on the window! That's right. The man is going to school—but not like the one you attend. He's taking a correspondence course.

Even though this man is in prison he wants to learn about the Bible and the catechism. He never had the chance before. When he finishes this course, with the counsel and help of the visiting pastor, he will receive a certificate for his achievement. When he is ready to leave prison, the pastor will act as his sponsor.

(End of scene.)

A pastor has a big job on his hands in prisons and correctional schools for boys and girls. He conducts services, teaches, administers holy communion, baptizes, counsels, and helps men and women, boys and girls to get a new start in life.

Some inner missions have a series of informal religious instruction periods at the community's youth study center. Here juvenile delinquents hear of God and his love—sometimes for the first time. These teen-agers at times become so in-

terested in the discussions that they get out their Bibles and argue over this point and that. To them religion is alive.

LEADER: These real life scenes have shown you how many, many lives are touched through the service of our church's inner missions. With each touch the spirit and love of Christ have been felt.

To discuss

1. How do the following people carry on inner mission work: Your pastor, your parents, your teacher, nurses, social workers, the merchant in your local store, your Luther League?

2. How can you be an inner mission worker?

3. How would you answer this question of a boy or girl your age whose father has died: "Why did God let this happen to me?"

To do

PLAN a party for children or old folks in a home. How about having it during a season other than Easter, Christmas or Hallowe'en when these homes are bombarded with parties? Talk it over with your league adviser or pastor and the head of the home.

HELP in a worship service in such a home, or in a hospital. You could have a choir, read the scripture lesson, and play the piano. Again, see your adviser or pastor. Just wait till you see how welcome you'll be at the home or hospital.

PLANNING a dress rehearsal for your play? Why not give it in a home for children or old folks? This would give you experience before a "live" audience and would give the residents a thrill. Be sure to make arrangements in plenty of time.

COLLECT clothing for children in foster homes and institutions. Be sure to talk with the head of the agency first.

For worship

Call to worship: Behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with Me.

Hymn: 231 CYH or 169 PSB

Scripture: Matthew 10:40-42

Program

Hymn: 294 CYH, or 271 PSB

Offering

Prayer: No. 83, page 380 CYH, or No. 35, page 29, PSB

The Lord's Prayer

Silent prayer as one stanza of last hymn is played.

No-pepsía, Plan-phobía, Lazy-ítis, and Copy-ítis almost killed this league. In fact the funeral was being held when Dr. Pepper Upper appeared brandishing a prescription that might cure it.

Topic, Topic, Who's Got the Topic?

By Billie Grace Ungerer

DEAR LOUIS,

I went to a funeral recently. It wasn't the usual kind with mourners dressed in black, and a long procession to the cemetery. No, indeed! The mourners wore flashy peg-top trousers and Mister B. shirts, or petticoats under gay swirling skirts. For the funeral took place in a Luther League meeting room on a Sunday night. Only young people attended. Not a single person cried. No one seemed very sad. And there was a strange emptiness among the teen-agers that made me pretty unhappy.

Our Luther League had died . . . slowly . . . from four diseases: *No-pepsia*, *Plan-phobia*, *Lazy-itis*, and *Copy-itis*. This is how it happened.

Everyone just came to our meeting—sat around gabbing about all the latest news—mumbled through the hymns—scooted chairs around while the leader read the topic—and drifted away after the program, hoping Mother and Dad wouldn't make them come back again. No one wanted to do anything. And if

the adviser suggested a plan the crew wailed, "But that won't work. Who wants to do it?" We had an agonizing case of No-pepsia.

Then our league got a second ailment. Sometimes a league member would troop in on Sunday only to be told that he was in charge of the program that evening. So until the very last minute, no one knew if the meeting were supposed to be a social, a worship service, or a project meeting. It was purely Plan-phobia that we had.

Our league might have lived, though, if Lazy-itis hadn't set in. Once in a while the group would grow enthusiastic. Then we would scramble madly around to plan the program three weeks in advance, and give the program leader his material early. Everything would seem under control. But, sure enough, the topic leader would flub. He just wouldn't bother to work on his program until Sunday afternoon. And we never knew how to make Joe Leaguer carry out his responsibility and stop being lazy.

Sadly enough, Copy-itis was the illness



"Getting-acquainted" scene for a set of slides is posed by members of Christ LL, Gettysburg, Pa. Slides show formal and informal datequette.

that finally made our league cough its
ast. The disease went like this: Joe had
he topic and read it. Jane had the next
rogram, and she copied Joe's system of
eading the topic. George's program fol-
lowed Jane's. He figured that he could
ead his material, too. And that's the way
e went Sunday after Sunday. Each leaguer
ead his part. This Copy-itis was fatal.
and the crowd" decided to bury the
eague.

Well, while the funeral was going on,
and some of the leaguers were saying,
Nothing ever happened . . . it's better

this way," Dr. Pepper Upper burst into
the room. He's a famous doctor from
the Luther League Clinic, you know. The
doctor had some medicine that he said
would cure our troubles. Here's his pre-
scription for our league. Maybe it will
help some others.

*Take doses weekly of
Cheerful Anticipation
Detailed Planning
Thoughtful Preparation
Hopeful, Expectant Prayer*

And do you know it worked! Sure, it

took a while for the medicine to take effect. But when it did you should have heard our league topics! The doctor made us continue taking doses of it as a tonic constantly, and he lectured us about health rules for Luther League.

Here are some of the rules he passed on to us. Perhaps your league will be more healthy if you follow them, too:

1. Look at each league meeting as an important occasion. It deserves your best planning and preparation.

2. Plan for the meeting as a whole . . . worship, topic, discussion, closing thought, and fellowship.

3. Be sure the leader of the meeting knows about his responsibility at least three weeks in advance. And remind him each week that he should be planning and gathering ideas.

4. Be sure that the room is arranged—books out—and everyone who is going to help lead the meeting in place and certain of what they're going to do before you ever start.

5. Plan something for the meeting room to help you think about the topic. It could be a picture, a chart, something on the chalk board, a display, or decorations.

6. Be sure to keep your league's diet balanced; plan to select from the following ways in which to present the topic:

Panel discussion

Debate

Buzz groups

Chalk talk

Bible baseball

Charades

Guest speaker

Filmstrips and slides

Chart talk

Socio-drama

Spontaneous skits

Singspiration

Field trips

Story telling

Radio or TV plays

Quizzes

Making flannelgraph or slides to tell stories

You know, we made a chart of the health rules and put them up in our league room. Then we checked each week to see how we were following them. We

continued to take the tonic prescribed by: (a) Eagerly looking forward to league and bringing other kids with us (b) Being sure that we started working on our topics far enough in advance so that we had time to plan them—and if the first plan didn't seem so good to make another one, (c) Reading the topic material in *HIGH IDEALS* and then looking in *The Lutheran*, in Sunday school literature, and in the paper and magazines for more information on it; (d) And being faithful in praying for our league and asking God to guide us while we planned and presented our topics.

Well, it worked! Our league was resurrected! Now we wouldn't miss it for anything.

Why don't you give Dr. Pepper Upper a call, too?

Recuperatingly yours,

TOM

Hints for the leader

Here's a fine chance to put Dr. Pepper Upper's prescription to work. Of course, you won't want to read this topic! All sorts of program techniques can help you make come alive for the other kids.

Think about the four diseases, No-pepsi. Plan-phobia, Lazy-itis, and Copy-itis. Why not get three leaguers together and plan skits that will demonstrate these diseases. It's good for your league to see what each disease is. You might be making the same mistake at your meetings.

To show No-pepsia, for instance, everyone can amble in, sit around, chat half-heartedly and sing at the verse of a hymn. Someone can mumble through a few paragraphs from *HIGH IDEALS*. And then the group can dribble out of the room.

Or for Plan-phobia the kids can come bounding into the room for league. Then one might walk up to another leaguer and ask him if he knew he was in charge of the program that night. Another way is to let the group arrive together, sounding excited and interested. When no one shows up to lead the meeting you can question one another about what's supposed to happen.

In Lazy-itis, a leaguer who is supposed to have the topic could be up front reading along. Then he could mention things that he might have done if he had looked at the topic earlier. He might have brought some of his brother's pictures from his recent trip

... or put some figures on the blackboard . . . asked a speaker to come . . . or gotten out slides that the church has about the story. You might read a paragraph then remark, "If I thought of it sooner we could have had . . ." Then read on and repeat the same thing about something else. This skit gets to be ridiculous. But that's what often happens!

A skit for Copy-itis would be simple. Let a Leaguer be seated at his desk getting ready for the program. He can think out loud, saying that Joe had a pretty good topic, and he read it. And so did Jane—so why couldn't he read the program, too.

Your imagination is important. Don't be afraid of being too absurd. A bit of humor adds interest.

Perhaps your next scene can be the doctor talking to an intermediate and giving the description of the tonic. Then let him talk to the leaguer about the health rules, for leagues, of course. It would be a good idea to write the rules on a blackboard and place it behind the doctor while he talks. And surely you can dream up a costume for the person playing the part of the doctor to give the skit a little atmosphere.

Buzz groups

After the skits, try using the buzz group technique. Pick about three topics from an issue of *HIGH IDEALS*. Divide your group into several smaller groups of about five people in each group. Let them get together in different corners of the room. Give each group a current issue of *HIGH IDEALS*. Then ask each buzz group to look at the topic and decide how it could be presented interestingly. The groups should have between five and eight minutes to decide. Now let each group report what it would do. The buzz groups go back to their corners to buzz again about topic No. 2 that you've selected. And they go back again for the third program.

To close the discussion you might have posted on the blackboard the foods for a balanced league diet listed in the topic. Ask each leaguer to vote for the one he thinks he would prefer. This poll should help the junior leaguers who plan your programs in the future. Never be afraid to try something new. It usually works!

Worship suggestions

Let's be different! Let's use the worship service to close our meeting rather than to begin it.

We might begin the meeting with a hymn of praise and adoration. Try No. 71; "God Himself Is Present," in the *Christian Youth*

Hymnal. Then present the program.

After the last bit of discussion you might sum the topic up by saying something like this: "We've talked about a lot of good ideas for better league programs. But maybe you feel like I do. . . . just a bit afraid to try them . . . not sure that you can ever learn to lead a good league program. But God has promised to be with us to help us in all that we do. Let's turn to him and ask for help that we need."

Then you might want to use an order of worship like this:

Call to worship:

"O Master Workman of the race,

Thou Man of Galilee,

Who with the eyes of early youth

Eternal things did see:

We thank Thee for Thy boyhood faith

That shone Thy whole life through;

'Did ye not know it is my work

My Father's work to do?'

O Thou who dost the vision send

And givest each his task,

And with the task sufficient strength:

Show us Thy will, we ask;

Give us a conscience bold and good;

Give us a purpose true,

That it may be our highest joy,

Our Father's work to do."

Hymn: "Lord, Speak to Me That I May Speak" (260 *CYH*)

Scripture: Galatians 6:9-10

Hymn: "We Would Be Building" (234 *CYH*)

(The offering may be received during the hymn.)

Prayer: (The leader may read the first line and the group respond with "O Lord, help us.")

To appreciate the treasures of knowledge in thy Word

R: O Lord, help us.

To desire to continue learning thy way of life

R: O Lord, help us.

To be willing to spend hours and talents for the building of any kingdom through our Luther League

R: O Lord, help us.

To offer ourselves to thee in willing service in thy church

R: O Lord, help us. Amen.

Hymn: "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast" (156 *CYH*)

Daily Bible readings

Psalms 27; Ephesians 4:1-16; James 1:5-8; Philippians 4:10-13; Colossians 1:9-14; Romans 8:26-32; II Thessalonians 3:1-5.

From Africa to India, from Japan to U. S.

Our Missions Span the Globe

By Mary A. Tozer

CHANG LEE's face shone. He was leaving the hospital today going back to his work in a Hong Kong bank. Ever since January he had been confined to bed with tuberculosis. Last week the doctors had told him he was cured. What good news!

Cured! Chang knew from actual experience about the power of prayer now. Not only the prayers that he and his Christian friends had offered for his getting well. But his prayers that his mother and Blossom, his fiancée, might accept the Christian faith that he, Chang, had had for over a year now. God had been very good; those prayers had been answered, too!

Chang's family had objected strongly when he told them that he was going to the Lutheran mission to study about Christianity. They had been even more angry when, after hearing Dr. Peng Fu preach one Sunday, Chang had told them that he was going to be baptized and confirmed.

Then like a bomb had come the news of his illness. As if he did not have troubles enough! First he, Chang, a prominent Chinese had to flee from Communist territory to Hong Kong, already crowded with other refugees. Then he had to hang on to his Christian beliefs in the face of strong opposition from his parents. Now—to have such news as this.

But Chang's faith stood the test. He and his new-found Christian friends had prayed day after day. Chang had followed the doctor's instructions daily to the tiniest detail. Now faith had its reward. For Chang's mother had seen for herself the peace on her son's face as she had visited him in the hospital dur-

ing the past eight months. She and Blossom had both become Christians and had joined the Lutheran Church in Hong Kong.

This is a true story and comes from our Lutheran Mission in Hong Kong. It could be duplicated over and over again these days in its pattern of evangelism. Hundreds of refugees have poured into Hong Kong as the Bamboo Curtain has dropped lower and lower over the rest of China.

Little news comes any longer from our United Lutheran Church mission area in northeastern China. Communists are in complete control there. What of the first Lutheran work that had been established there—the churches, the hospital, the schools? What of the Chinese Christians?

We can be certain of nothing about them except that they need our prayers in these difficult days. We must pray that they remain strong in the Christian faith and that they be given strength to stand the trials and temptations facing them every day.

If you were a roving reporter visiting the mission fields of our United Lutheran Church, you would see two things: First that people are very devoted to their own countries—a trait called "nationalism"—and then that more and more churches in these countries are becoming self-governing. They are linked by marriages with our United Lutheran Church in America. But little by little these churches are learning to stand on their own feet to solve their own problems, and to care for their own needs.

Japan

The Japan Lutheran Church is self-governing. But there is such a large opportunity for Christian work in Japan that a great many missionaries have been

ent from America since the war.

Buildings have gone up to take the place of those bombed out during the last war. New congregations are being organized. Kindergartens, colleges, our Lutheran Seminary in Tokyo are crowded. Japanese young people are eager to learn. These are days of spiritual awakening in Japan. Everywhere there are opportunities to spread Christianity.

India

In India is a fine example of a former mission. The Andhra Lutheran Church is the largest and the oldest of our ULC fields. It is now self-governing.

Many Indian church leaders grew up from childhood in the Christian faith. Now they have become superintendents and managers of the Lutheran college, high schools, some of the industrial and elementary schools and most of the Lutheran hospitals. Since missionaries no longer have to do this work, they can now be used to bring non-Christians into the church. These days the Indian church leaders tell them what to do.

Sugamma, a little girl from one of the villages of southeastern India, tossed restlessly on her pillow. Her bright eyes were dulled by fever. The missionary who bathed her hot forehead kept other children far from Sugamma's room at the school. For the girl was ill with the dread cholera. If a strict quarantine were not kept, the whole village might come down with the disease. For days, the little girl lay between life and death, while the missionary poured medicine between her parched lips and prayed that God might spare her life.

That was 25 years ago. God did spare Sugamma's life. She recovered from the disease and continued going to school at our Lutheran mission.

Not long ago Sugamma became head mistress of the Girl's Higher Elementary School in Rentichintala. The missionary who proudly turned over the work to this fine Christian young woman was the same one who had prayed that God might spare a seven-year-old child desperately ill with cholera.

Liberia

It's a big leap from India to Liberia, a tiny country on the west coast of Africa. But there, too, we find national leadership developing in the Liberian Lutheran Church. Our most important work here is to supply the church with native workers, to make strong Christian leaders, and to teach people how to read and write. As dozens of Liberians are learning to read and write for the first time in their lives, they are becoming aware of all that they lack.

Good schools and hospitals are now available on the civilized coast of Liberia. So, much of our mission work is being moved into the village areas—far in the interior of the country. With the work, we are moving the hospital, and training schools inland. From these schools will come Liberian young men and women who will be well trained to work with their own people in the villages in the interior.

Wozi is a proud man in Liberia today. He lives in a mud hut in an African village. But his hut is a little better than those of the rest of the town. Wozi is the village chief.

It was to him that a runner came one day to "palaver" about bringing a strange chart to his town. Would he give permission for the white man to hang the chart on the wall of one of the huts near the center of the village? If Wozi said "yes," the messenger reported, all the people of the village could be taught to read and write.

Read and write! Wozi knew what that meant. Several times he had picked up papers left by someone traveling through his village and had wished he knew what the strange signs on the papers meant. Yes, he would give his permission gladly, he answered, on condition that he, the chief, be taught too.

And so Wozi sat in the blazing sun with the rest of the townspeople and watched carefully as the missionary pointed to the pictures on the chart and then to symbols in the Loma language opposite each picture. It wasn't long before Wozi was reading sentences . . . and

then paragraphs.

Now he sends letters regularly to our missionaries in other parts of Liberia—letters that he Wozi, Loma chieftain, has written with his own hand. Several months ago one of those letters announced proudly that Wozi was going to be baptized after he had studied a little more about what it meant to be a Christian.

South America

In South America, too, we find a rapidly developing national leadership in our mission fields. The Lutheran Church of Argentina is eager to have more of its own pastors. In fact, it is so intent on training young men for the ministry that last year it established a pre-Seminary Home where boys are being trained for Christian service as ministers or teachers. In the last two years, the Luther League of America has given more than \$29,000 to help build the school.

In British Guiana, much farther north in South America, our missionaries are teaching the people to take over the work of the church. The catechists' and the parish workers' schools are receiving special attention. More and more the people of this country can be its Christian leaders.

United States

Moving closer home we see a rickety Ford jolting along over a slippery mountain road in a remote section of the State of Virginia. On one side is a steep cliff—and no rail to guard against a sudden skid. And at the other, the side of the mountain.

The bearded, gaunt man and worried-looking woman in the car pay no attention to the dangers of the road. She is holding a baby in her arms and every now and then she glances down at the child to be sure it is still living. They are hurrying to get their child to the little town at the foot of that mountain. For the baby is desperately ill. They know that only the mission doctor can help her.

Last year their older child, Johnny, had been very sick. At the time he was

attending Iron Mountain School for Boys at Konnarock. Dr. Meyer, the same mission doctor, had saved him. Perhaps someday, the mother thought as she held her child close, this girl could come to Konnarock, too. She could attend the Girls School there, to learn all the fine things they were teaching Johnny.

Teaching, evangelism and medical care in the Southern Mountains of Virginia is just one tiny part of the vast work of our Board of American Missions. Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Alaska, the hard work with the Creole Indians at Rocky Boy, Montana—all of these plus the big job of building new mission churches all over our country are a big venture in Christian faith and in Christian dollars.

Leader's guide

You may give the entire topic yourself, telling briefly about our United Lutheran Church work all over the world. It will be more interesting if you mount a large world map at the front of your meeting room so that you can point to each country as you talk about it.

Perhaps you will decide to let five or six people help with the topic. In that case, call them together ahead of time (not that same evening!) and go over the topic with them. Then assign each one a part of it to tell in his own words, as he is called on.

The Board of Foreign missions has excellent slides and sound motion pictures on several of our foreign fields. Write to them for the free leaflet listing them. Then order the one you want—or ask for any slide set, or motion picture, on one foreign field. The leaflet lists the prices for these audio-visuals.

Suggested worship

Call to worship: "O Sing unto the Lord a new song: for he hath done marvelous things."

Hymn: "Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life".

Responsive reading: Psalm 100

Gloria Patri (sung or said)

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20; Revelation 21:1-7

Prayer: Free prayer by leader, ending with No. 19 in *PSH*, page 26

Hymn: "Spread, O Spread, Thou Might Word"

Topic:

Offering (special music)

Hymn: "Christ for the World We Sing"

HE was tall, blond, and rather quiet—not an athlete, nor a “lady killer”—but the most popular boy in school. One evening I learned the secret of his successful personality.

We were playing games that called for choosing partners. I noticed that he would always select a girl who wasn't likely to be asked by the other fellows. When I asked him why he did this he answered, “Whenever I go anywhere I start to worry about whether or not I'm going to have a good time. Then I appoint myself a committee of one to see that the others have a good time. The popular girls don't need me. But the shy, quiet ones do. You see, some girl did as much for me once. I know how they feel. And I always have a good time. I don't know why.”

How about you? Are you popular? Or do people think of you as a “square,” a “droop,” a “pill,” or a “show-off?” Maybe you are. But I doubt it. If you were you wouldn't be reading this article. If you are aware of your personality enough to want to learn how to have a dynamic personality, you are already half way to your goal. Having discovered that not everyone thinks you are irresistible, and having started to learn how to improve yourself by reading, discussing, and observing others, you are like the scientists working on the atom. After much study, research, and experimentation, it happened—they split the atom.

We are ready, too, to discover great and limitless power as we learn to split the atom—by that I mean the almighty I. Until we break down our “me first” attitude we cannot be popular, compelling, nor successful in making friends. The only successful formula for this split is Jesus first, Others second, Yourself last. Let's call this formula F.O.Y., from the first letters of the key words in it.

When we put Jesus first we will be humble, knowing what we should be like and are not. We will be joyful, pleasant, and hopeful because we know that through him our sins are forgiven and we have an eternal home. We will have poise and confidence because we know that we are very important to him. He loves us and will always be with us.

Others next. In school or at a party do you often feel very self-conscious and uncomfortable? You steal a quick look around the room and notice how gay and chatty the little groups of young people seem. And you wish that someone would come over and talk to you. You look down at your suit or dress. Then you are certain that you wore the wrong clothes. Pretty soon you wish that you had never come.

Why do you feel so low? Because your concentration on yourself has made you lonely, unhappy, and very much like a real “sad sack.”

Forget yourself! Look around. There across the room is someone sitting all alone, looking just like a—a real “sad sack.” Why don't you go over to him and say, “Hi! Did you see the game yesterday?” Or, “How did you make out on that English test?” Soon you will be talking and laughing like the others. You will forget about yourself because you are interested in helping another person enjoy himself. You will have a

This article on how to be popular was written by Betty W. Albing.

good time—and you will win a friend.

Radiation

This part of atomic energy reaches way out and touches unsuspecting people and places far from the center of the explosion. An "atomic personality" radiates, touching the lives of many people whose names are never known.

In a crowded, noisy bus have you ever noticed one person perhaps who wasn't shoving rudely, or talking loudly, or behaving unmannerly, but rather was polite, considerate, and had a warm, friendly smile on his face? Such a person really "radiates." If you can't find such a person on your bus, look in the mirror. You should find him there.

You can't get "buddy-buddy" with everyone. People are going to like you for the little things they see you do or hear you say when you don't even know they are watching. Popular boys and girls are not only well liked by their pals, they are popular with bus drivers, sales clerks, teachers, and neighbors.

The most popular girl in my high school was a sweet girl named Doris. She was always concerned about other people, trying to do something nice for them. Until you knew her very well, you never heard her story. She had to do all the house work because her mother was an invalid, confined to a wheel chair. Doris worked part-time to help financially since her father could not hold a steady job. She couldn't go out on dates because she had to study when she wasn't working to try to win a scholarship for college. Instead of feeling sorry for herself she was so interested in others that she naturally radiated all the time.

She was so well liked that she was one of the few girls ever elected to be student body president of this large New York high school. She was a grand Christian girl, very active in her Baptist church. She spoke freely and easily about Christ her Savior when people asked her why she always looked so happy.

It is impossible to be conscious of everyone around us, wondering what he or she may think of what we are doing. Therefore "radiation" cannot be planned for effect. It must come naturally from the heart. With the "Atom, I, split" and with a sincere effort to follow the JOY "formula," radiation will be powerful, and very effective in winning friends for you.

Chain reaction

No doubt you've seen cartoons that picture chain reaction. For instance, the boss loses his temper with one of his men. This man goes home and screams at his wife. She scolds her son. The boy yells at his dog. The dog chases after and bites a passer-by who turns out to be the boss. It would be very funny if it were not so true.

What you say and do, even your attitude toward others will work its way back to you, eventually. A warm smile and a sincere compliment to a school mate is a much better way to start the day than a bitter complaint or an unkind bit of gossip. To use the Biblical term—you will only reap what you sow.

You have probably been part of a "chain" like that many times. It may start with a nasty remark about a classmate. Or it could be your, "No" to another person's good idea. Feelings get hurt and no one enjoys himself.

In an "atomic personality" a chain works in reverse. Kind words, honest praise and the words "yes let's" start the chain of friendly feelings, enthusiasm, and a generally fine time. Others will soon learn that you are fun to be with. You can't help but be popular.

More research and study

You have to keep working on your personality all the time. Read articles like "Sub Deb" in the *Ladies Home Journal*. Study people around you. Try, try, try! Don't give up too easily—it won't happen over night. And most important of all pray about

t. Christ wants to help you. Pray for others, pray for ideas on what you can do for others, and pray for forgiveness for the mistakes you have made.

Be the dynamic, atomic personality you were meant to be, and people will be drawn to you like a magnet.

Program guide

Publicity for your meeting should be startling and arouse enthusiasm. You might use this statement: "Blow up your unhappiness! Explode your loneliness! Destroy the devil's agents—weakness and selfishness!"

The material may be presented by one or more leaguers who have studied the material. Each one should add his own examples and use his own words.

Through the discussion after the topic, look at the negative side, that is what you don't want in your personalities. You might ask this question, "What are the traits that would keep us from having an atomic personality?"

Liven up these traits of personality mentioned by giving them names of people, like "Sammy-Show-off," "Minnie My-way," "Nellie Nasty," "Peter Pusher," "Tillie Talk-Talk," "Willy Wet Blanket," and "Irma Irresponsible." Beforehand have some leaguers primed with these suggestions. Others will come from the group. Perhaps you might act out the traits of each of these people.

Let the discussion leader, an adult, write the suggestions on a blackboard, so that the group may discuss them further. Then the league might dig into the suggestions, answering questions such as. Why do some people show off so much? What could they do to get attention and still be popular? Why do you suppose "Tillie" talks so much? Why is she so hard to listen to? What makes a good conversation?

After the discussion each leaguer might list the "enemy agents" in his "atomic personality plant." (A secret file, of course.) Each one could take his list home and tack it up where he can spot it easily—in the bureau mirror—in the top dresser or desk drawer—in his New Testament. Then he should concentrate on getting rid of these enemies, one a day.

Worship service

Call to worship: Whatever you do in thought, word or deed, do all to the glory of God.

Hymn: "I Would Be True." CYH 284

Scripture: Matthew 25: 34-40, Ephesians 4: 32, Galatians 6: 9-10, and I Timothy 4: 8 and 12. (Each read by a different leaguer.)

Prayer:

Lord, help me live from day to day
In such a self-forgetful way
That even when I kneel to pray
My prayer will be for *others*.
Help me in all the work I do
To ever be sincere and true
And know that all I do for You
Must needs be done for *others*.
Let self be crucified and slain
And buried deep, and all in vain
May efforts be to rise again
Unless to live for *others*.
Others, Lord, yes, others
Let this my motto be;
Help me to live for *others*.
That I may live like thee.

("Others" by Charles D. Meigs)

Hymn: "Oh Master, Let Me Walk with Thee," CYH 195

Daily Bible reading Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7.

Spotlight on Famous Men . . .

Philip Melancthon

The man who played second fiddle on Luther's team can show you how to make your group's goal more important than being the star performer.

By Ben F. Sheetz

Thunderjets crash the speed of sound almost every day now. Atomic power is all but ready to take over. Maybe even electricity as we know it will be out-of-date soon. Perhaps space ships will zoom right out of the comic strips one of these days and make inter-planetary travel real. What's next? Who knows? It's great to be alive in 1954, isn't it?

It was great to be alive in 1517, too. Twenty-five years before that date Columbus had discovered a new continent beyond the Atlantic Ocean. A man named Gutenberg had invented printing from movable type not long before. And on October 31st of that year a young monk, Martin Luther, hammered a paper containing 95 theses to a church door. His act had really started things humming.

Old ideas never give up without a fight, and the years following 1517 saw plenty of hard fights. Suppose we picture the events then as though they were a football game. Looking back more than 400 years to that "gridiron" we want to shout, "Yeah, Luther! Yeah, Luther!" Luther seemed to be carrying the ball so much of the time.

For every player on a football field

there's at least one substitute waiting on the bench. In the background the head coach lives each play. The line coach watches his men, scouting their strength and weaknesses, and analyzing each play. The ball-carrier of the Reformation was Martin Luther. But there were men on his team who helped make the Reformation possible.

A little before the time of Luther, John Huss had been burned to ashes for his part in the game. Many others also sacrificed their lives for daring to speak against the Church of Rome.

Luther's team

Let's turn the spotlight on one of Luther's team-mates, Philip Melancthon, often thought of as the No. 2 man on the Reformation team.

Philip was born February 16, 1497, just five years after that Friday morning in 1492 when sailors of Columbus' small fleet cried, "Land, ho."

We could say, almost, that Melancthon was born a scholar. His family name had been Schwarzerd, a word meaning "black earth" in German. Philip's uncle, Reuchlin, loved the Greek language so well that he decided to translate the family name into that language. So Schwarzerd became Melancthon, which means "black

earth," in Greek.

Like his uncle, the boy Philip quickly fell in love with Greek and Latin. At the age of 17, when most boys are learning the meaning of symbols like H_2O , or are struggling with theorems and angles in geometry, Philip received his master of arts degree, and became a college professor. Even in that day he was considered unusual. In short, he was a brain.

From his studies in the classics, Melancthon went on to a careful study of the Bible in the original Hebrew and Greek. He accepted a professorship in what was then the new University of Wittenberg. Martin Luther was also a professor at that school. The two men began a friendship that lasted throughout their lives.

Philip's studies in the Bible led him to another degree—bachelor of divinity. He could have become a doctor of divinity, also, but he refused to accept that title. He considered himself no more than a student in the Bible and theology. Oddly enough, though he wrote many sermons for others to preach he never stepped into the pulpit to deliver one of his own.

Philip no coward

In his own day Philip Melancthon was famous for his learning, and for his writings. Today we remember him chiefly because he played on Martin Luther's team. Luther was fiery, at his best when he was plunging through the line, or leading a march across the field to score a touchdown. His life was in almost constant danger. So what? To him truth and conscience were more important. Philip, quiet, gentle, thoughtful, kept passing the ball to Luther. Always Melancthon stayed in the background. That was where he wanted to be. He wasn't a coward. He was the type who didn't like a fight. Period.

Different as they were, these two men were good for each other. Although Philip agreed with the principles of the Reformation movement, he kept wanting to compromise with its enemies. Often Luther had to stop him from doing so.

On the other hand when Luther needed help it was Philip who gave it. Through his writings he defended Luther against the Church of Rome. He put into written words the things for which the Reformation movement stood. He helped Luther translate the Bible from its original languages into the language of the German people. It was Luther, of course, who stood before the Diet of Worms and declared, "There I take my stand. I can do naught otherwise. So help me, God. Amen." It was Philip Melancthon who later wrote the Augsburg Confession, putting into words for all time those things for which Luther took his stand.

Superior in learning

Philip was superior to Luther in learning. The books he wrote attracted attention everywhere. In that day they attracted more attention, even, than Luther's writings. Had Philip wanted to, he might have fought with Luther over carrying the ball. What might have happened to the Protestant movement if he had? We can only guess. But this trait of Philip Melancthon, his willingness to be No. 2 man, is a good idea to look into.

Everyone shouts at us to surpass, to excel, to reach the top. That's all right at times. But when should we be willing to be second best? Here are a few rules that might guide you:

(1) Make your group or team goal the most important thing. Think about the ways you can help your team or your group win. If the ball falls into your hands and you are the one to make a touchdown, remember all those who helped in the victory. If you pass the ball to the next player and he makes the touchdown, be proud that you had a part in it. Compare George Washington with Napoleon, Hitler, and Mussolini. Washington thought first, and always, of the goal—victory for the American colonies in their fight. Napoleon, Hitler, Mussolini set out to be No. 1 men. Where are they today?

(2) Try to find the spot where you play best. This isn't always easy. It is

even harder, often, to be willing to play in that spot. Philip Melancthon was at his best thinking, studying, writing. Had he tried to be bold, dramatic, fiery, like Luther, he would had been ridiculous and little more.

(3) Teach yourself to do your best just for the sake of doing your best. If someone notices how hard you tried, and applauds, fine. If not, you have the inner satisfaction of knowing that you did your best. Players who keep watching the grandstands don't make many touchdowns anyway.

Program plans

Turn your spotlight on men connected with the Reformation movement who are not so well known as Martin Luther. Of course, since this topic material discusses Philip Melancthon, his name will probably head your list. You might add Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, even John Wesley, or Roger Williams. These men will probably not be too well known to you, although they are founders of Protestant churches.

Assign one of these men to each of several leaguers. Have them look up as much interesting material as they can find on their assignments. Any good encyclopedia will do. Your librarian, or your pastor, will be glad to help.

The Reformation team

To show that many men had a part in this great movement you might outline on a blackboard a familiar football formation. Draw small circles, allowing each one to stand for a player. Then write the name of some Reformation figure near each circle.

To the leaders named above you might add John Huss, John Wyclif, Erasmus, Savonarola. With Melancthon and Luther your Reformation team will number 11. You may not have time to give a report on each. But your leaguers will become familiar with their names, at least. All of us who enjoy freedom in religious matters, owe a debt to these heroes.

A get-acquainted session

Invite to your meeting an intermediate from each of the Protestant churches in your community, as a follow-up of this meeting. Ask him to be ready to give some facts about the history of his denomination.

You might seat your guests at the front of the room with cards to identify them. During the program ask each for a brief report.

This will give you an opportunity to become better acquainted with other young peoples groups in your town. At the same time your own leaguers will be glad to learn about other churches.

Check list

How good am I at playing second-fiddle? Remember, this was the one trait of Melancthon that we stressed. Since there are times when all of us can serve best by accepting a place not at the top, here are a few questions, in case your fellow-members want to rate themselves on this quality.

(Since there are five questions, 20 points to each would be a perfect score; 15 points "good"; 10, "fair"; 5, "poor." Of course, you will be careful not to ask anyone what he considered his rating to be.

(1) I have planned to go somewhere, only to do something. A member of my family, or someone else, needs me desperately. Do I give up my plans willingly?

(2) Am I a good loser? Do I accept defeat for my team without growing bitter? Do I lose interest in a game when I see that I am not going to win?

(3) When others are speaking do I frequently interrupt? In a group do I catch myself doing most of the talking?

(4) In any project do I want to be in the spotlight, carry the ball, be president; or do I consider it more important that the project succeed?

(5) Do I readily share credit for my successes with others? Am I quick to compliment others, when they do something outstanding?

Don't be surprised if your "I'll-play-second-fiddle" rating isn't too high. Jesus knew how important it was for us to have this trait. That is why he was always reminding his disciples to place others first, to be willing to be last.

Worship

Quiet music (or humming) "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" CYH 149

Hymn: "To the Knights in the Days of Old" CYH 230

Scripture: Matt. 20:20-28, Luke 22:24-27

Topic

Sentence prayers, thanking God for those who contributed to our Christian heritage; Asking for strength to control our selfish impulses so that we, too, may learn to be least in his kingdom

Hymn: "O Christians Leagued Together"

CYH 236, might serve a dual purpose here emphasizing teamwork by men of old, as well as leaguers.

Luther League Benediction.

Cases Showing Parent-Child Conflict

Losing son's Confidence

DEAR EDITOR: My 13-year-old son and I are not as close as I think we should be. Lately I have a vague feeling that he has not been entirely truthful with me. He seems to operate on the idea that what he doesn't tell me won't worry me. How can I gain his confidence?

Forgotten Dad

Complains of Treatment

I am the oldest of three children. I don't mind it, but my mother and father treat me worse than a housekeeper or maid. My father buys my sisters expensive clothes and gets me cheap stuff. I have tried to tell them how I feel, but when I do they won't talk to me. What should I do?

J. G.

Girl, 15, in love with man, 29

DEAR EDITOR: I am a girl of 15. I am in love with a married man of 29. I know I shouldn't be going with him but I really do like him. My parents forbid me to see him. How can I change their minds?

Young Lover

Parents Can Be Problems

You need to act, not sulk, when coping with Mom and Dad

By Loice E. Gouker

EVERY personal problem column in a newspaper or magazine bulges with despairing letters like those signed "Young Lover" and "Forgotten Dad." Parents belittle the attitudes of their offspring. And teen-agers rebel against their parents. Such letters tell us that the problems between youth and their parents are very real.

Few people, either teen-agers or their elders who need help, write to newspaper or magazine editors for advice. Most just wory through their troubles without

seeking aid. Chances are that you have some problems, or pet gripes that might be straightened out. Perhaps if you think about and discuss some of these troubles, you will see how you can restore, or build greater understanding among the members of your family.

You are growing up. You are striving for adult standing. So plenty of problems are bound to arise. Parents seem to get in your road and your hair at every step. How can they be such problems! Sometimes you are sure your mother and dad are the meanest ones in the block.



"Be prepared with your own notebook to keep track of the money you get."

Let's look at some of the matters you squabble over. Perhaps such a study might serve to prove your point—or else shoot holes in it. Are you game enough to look deeper and run the risk of discovering that there are two sides to those complaints?

The things that worry you and your ma and pa fall into two classes: Minor and serious. Minor ones are your frets over clothes, money, privileges, and the like. Who says these things are minor, says you? They're serious to you. But when you compare them with major ones like having divorced parents, or stepparents, or something of that kind your worries seem rather small.

We'll talk about the minor ones for these are more common—and only temporary. Plenty of other junior highs have the same gripes as you do. So you'll probably find some of your friends blowing off steam in this discussion. It may help you to know that you are not alone.

That money question

Let's take the matter of allowance first. Either you have one that you think is not enough. Or you don't have an allowance, and you wish you had even an inadequate one.

Suppose you are not satisfied with the situation. You speak to Dad about it. Now being a problem parent, he gives you an argument that *he* had to work for every cent he got when he was your age. Allowances hadn't been invented yet. What do *you* do to deserve a weekly salary? So you crawl away to your corner and sulk. Of course, *everybody* you know is quite happy and secure with his financial arrangements, but you . . . Oh! And so you pity yourself.

But let's be up and at it, boys. Attack the matter from another angle. Surprise the enemy! Here's the plan. For at least a month, keep a list of every penny you spend. A longer time would be better if you could hold yourself in check a few more weeks. Get yourself a little book and write down in two columns the item and the price. If you are reasonable in your expenses—and aren't buying three bottles of hair tonic every 10 days or flitting around to three movies a week when one is the limit, take the account to the senior gentleman. Now you can show him proof that you are not "Generous Jerry" for the gang. And that you do pile up regularly a few legitimate expenses that Dad is paying for anyway.

Instead of your lunch money being dropped by your cereal bowl at breakfast, or your asking for bus fare each evening, why not ask for all the money you need for a whole week at a time. And you take the responsibility for making it reach around the corners. If your dad seems hesitant about this, suggest a trial period. Then solemnly promise yourself that you've got to make it work.

Maybe you could do just one thing extra around the house to show your appreciation. The thing that worries Mom the most would be the best. Is it leaving a ring in the handbowl or tub?

Take the offensive again and be prepared with your little notebook to keep track of the money you get. List the dates on the left (Saturday is a good pay-day) and a space beside the date for your signature. Thereby you and your dad will each know what is due and when the ac-

ount is paid up. Fair enough?

Who is boss?

"They treat me like a child," lamented Dotty. Then she mimicked her mother. "It's time to do your homework now. Wear this dress today. Clean your teeth. Where have you been the last five minutes? Take your umbrella. Do it this way." And Dotty ended her sneering remarks with, "Goll-eee."

Dotty's mother would have been cut to the quick if she had heard this take-off. She would have remembered Dotty's childhood in a flash. Then she would have remarked, "This is the thanks I earn for nursing Dotty through earaches, toothaches, headaches, and just aches; for wearing old gloves at Easter so Daughter could buy a class pin." On she would have gone through all the sacrifices.

Dotty had been the center of Mother's affection for many years. Mother still felt a great responsibility for her. "Too great an affection," Dotty would growl if she knew her mother's thoughts.

Like Dotty, you still require two things: Independence, which your parents seem so reluctant to give you; and security, which they so freely provide. Really, you are not ready to become the free soul you think you should be. That takes emotional coming-of-age. You are striving for it. But it comes slowly and hasn't arrived yet!

In some of these childish things that you can manage quite efficiently without suggestion and command, get the jump on your PM or PF (short for problem mother or problem father). Do the things *before* they suggest. Even if it takes wild horses to drive you, go right to your room and get your homework done as soon as you come from school. Then when PF reminds you about studies at 7:30 say, "I'd like you to look at it. It's all done." A week of this and PF will cease to remind you—for there is nothing to remind you of. Just be sure there isn't!

Regarding what to wear, get the jump on PM and PF again. Lay out the clothes

you think would be appropriate for the next day. Call PM to your room to approve your choices. A week of this and PM will cease to suggest for suggestions are unnecessary. Of course, be careful about your selection. Don't ruin everything with an impossible combination of striped blouse, polka-dot kerchief, and tartan plaid skirt!

It's fun, Mom

One day Fran's mother asked her to polish the floor while she put the finishing touches on the girl's new yellow organdy.

"Let me do it the way I want to?" Fran bargained.

Thinking there was one and only one way to polish a floor, her mother agreed. But she did not see the delightful possibilities of floor polishing.

This was Fran's formula: Apply the wax, turn on the record player take off your shoes, stand on a big soft cloth, and skate, glide, slide, and jitterbug all over the place. The result was a high gloss that passed her mother's eagle-eye inspection. "Letting her do it her own way," remarked her mother, "turned a job into fun. Fran got the idea that I wasn't a poor sport who always wants to be boss."

Family powwow

Sometimes parents get so used to giving orders, telling you what to do, and when and how to take action, that they forget you have your own opinions. They do this in all good faith. So they might not know how you feel. Before you condemn your innocent folks have a heart-to-heart talk with them. Not just once, but say once a month. Bring out all your woes. You'll encourage them to state their side, too. It could be that you will learn some eye-opening opinions.

Sometimes it might be fun to trade places with PM and PF. You could be the parent, and let them represent you. Let them be the condemned—the one on the carpet—and you the judge.

You may often feel like the condemned. But really now you know that

you are not. You can be sure of your family no matter what you do. Friends may fall away. But your family is behind you always. You "belong." They give you a feeling of great security. Your independence from them will come. Do not be impatient.

You're not done

A few lines can't cover a problem thoroughly. The one that clouds your skies may not even have been mentioned. Because they will help you, the following books are recommended. Look for them in your school or public library.

Crow and Crow, *Learning to Live with Others*

Jenkins and Neuman, *How to Live with Parents*

Lawton, George, *How to be Happy though Young*

Seashore and Van Dusen, *How to Solve Your Problems*

Wood, Mildred, *Living Together in the Family*

Your program plans

"Parents Can Be Problems" can be one of the most helpful programs in your league, and also one of the most popular. Since this topic is concerned with problems and solutions, find a way to plan your meeting so that real problems of your leaguers may be discussed and perhaps solved.

This topic needs the ideas and viewpoints of teen-agers and adults. Why not, then, plan a "clinic." Ask some intermediates (three is a good number for this purpose) and an equal number of adults to be members of a "board of experts." Pick your "experts" carefully. Probably the adult "experts" should not be parents of teen-agers who will be attending your meeting. Then select a master of ceremonies—an adult.

At the meeting before this topic is to be used, ask each league member to write down the problems between him and his parents that bother him most. (Of course, no leaguer signs his name to his list.) These lists of problems should be given either to the emcee of your clinic, or to the adult on your committee planning this program. This person then selects the problems that the "board of experts" will consider.

Be sure that the emcee and the "experts" know beforehand the problems that they are to talk about.

Your clinic will operate like this: A leaguer introduces the program, using the introductory material in the topic. Then the emcee presents the first problem to the "board of experts". Each "expert" gives his idea as to the solution to the problem. Then the next problem is brought up, repeating the same procedure.

Of course, the emcee doesn't have to give every problem. You might find that you add sparkle to your program by dramatizing one or two. Use the suggested solutions in the topic if the problems your leaguers have seem to be similar to those mentioned in this material. Somewhere in your clinic, be sure to mention the family powwow.

IF YOUR LEAGUE IS SMALL perhaps you might prefer to plan an informal discussion on the topic. As described above, get the problems that bother your leaguers at the meeting before this topic is scheduled. Ask a fair, capable adult to be discussion leader and let the leaguers talk over the list of problems. Invite two adults, who are not parents of junior highs who will be attending your meeting, to come. Their job will be to give the viewpoints of parents on the problems or to suggest solutions of problems.

Use the material in the topic to introduce your program, and wherever it can help to solve some troubles being discussed. Mention the family powwow, too, in your meeting.

Worship

Arrange your worship service from the following elements:

Hymns: "O Jesus I Have Promised," 241 CYH or 155 PSH; "Dear Lord and Father of Mankind," 215 CYH or 223 PSH; "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty," 78 CYH or 248 PSH; "Now in the Days of Youth," 240 CYH; "Holy Father, in Thy Mercy," 204 CYH; and "Teach Me, My God and King," 217 CYH.

Call to worship: Read the Beatitudes, Matthew 5:3-11

Scripture: Ephesians 6:1-5

Prayer: "O Loving Father, bless our homes, that we may all be happy in thy love, and in our love for each other. Make us loyal and generous, ready to help and quick to forgive. May Jesus, thy Son, be our loved and honored guest, sharing our joys and comforting our sorrows. May thy loving Spirit rule our hearts and lips by the law of kindness. O loving Father, make us all thy true and happy children, and fill our homes with the gladness of thy presence in Jesus' name we pray. Amen."

God Holds Your I.O.U.

What do you
owe Him?



THE ball bounced once and then it was in the hands of the teacher. Whose ball was it? Who threw it? What was it doing in the classroom? These questions needed answers. Who knew the answers?

By Samuel E. Kidd

Leader's choice

If you don't know the answers to those questions now, you will soon. For you as program leader are going to head an exploration of stewardship. You will explore by asking questions.

There are several ways you can present your program. The easiest is for you to tell or read the story that introduces the topic. Then ask the first question entitled "What do I have?" Let your leaguers try to answer this question. Be sure you understand the answer given in the topic so that you can help your

leaguers to understand it. Continue asking the questions in the rest of the topic. Follow the topic by asking the questions for discussion.

If your league does not discuss questions freely, you will probably find it better to present your program in this way: Introduce the topic with the story. Then let one leaguer ask the questions in the topic, and you answer them in your own words, or read the answers. End by using the questions for discussion.

Or you might give the topic questions and answers to several leaguers before your meeting. After your introduction ask the questions. Let your league try to

answer them—and then ask the leaguer holding the proper question to read the answer. Follow through with the questions for discussion at the end of the topic.

Of course, the leader may read the topic material and use it as a basis for his presentation. Then ask the discussion questions at the end of the topic.

Do you like to do something different? Do you like to experiment with your program plans? Then the last suggestion is for you—who dares to create a novel program. Present the program as a court room scene. Select an able adult to be the lawyer. He introduces the topic, telling briefly what he will try to prove. Then he questions the witnesses (two or three leaguers), using the questions in the topic, and adding others. After the witnesses have been questioned, the lawyer sums up his case. Then he questions the league as a whole, using the discussion at the end of the topic. He should explain to the group that they are the jury.

Of course, you will want to practice this a bit, so that the lawyer and the witnesses will be at ease and will be familiar with the questions.

The topic

The ball bounced once and then it was in the hands of the teacher. Whose ball was it? Who threw it? What was it doing in the classroom? These questions needed answers. Who knew the answers?

Everybody knew that the ball was hard. Everybody heard the noise it made on that one bounce. Someone must have smuggled it into the classroom. Someone must have tossed it. But who?

Fred recognized the ball. It was his. Charlie recognized the ball. He threw it. More than half the class recognized the ball, but the teacher didn't. He tried to find the answers to a lot of questions. They were questions about possession and time and ability.

"Possession is nine tenths of the law," Charlie said in a whisper. "It must be yours. You have it, Teacher," he added in a voice that was louder than he in-

tended.

The teacher heard him.

"Charles, is this your ball?" he asked immediately.

"No," said Charlie.

Questions! Questions! Questions!—A Junior High School student gets tired of hearing them. And so many of the questions are about what you own, how you spend your time, and what you do. Here are some more questions about the same things. You are going to do the asking. You are going to ask them of yourself. May we help you form the questions—and the answers.

"What do I have?"

Do I want to ask myself that or would I rather ask, "What don't I have?" Whichever way I ask it, the answers seem the same.

I have a body with hair and arms and legs and a brain. I have a place I call home where I store my clothes and books and an occasional dollar. If you wrap me and all I own into one package, the parcel would be larger than a bread box, but smaller than a car. What I have can't be very important to anyone but myself. What I don't have doesn't seem to be very important to anyone else either. What I don't have is larger than a car. I want what I don't have and sometime I may get it.

Do I have time?

Time for what? That is a funny question. I know the time when I look at my watch. I can even tell someone else the time. But, do I have time? Do I have time like I have a watch?

I have time all right—for some things. I have time to give to a lot of things. I give time to play and study and eat. But where do I get the time to give? If I am giving it, then I must have it to give. Surely I have time. I have 14 years of it already, and I will have some more. I guess the only time I have right now is the present though. I gave 14 years away and I haven't yet gotten tomorrow. All I have is today.

Do I have ability?

I will never be an Atlas holding up the earth, but I can walk. Who knows

someday I may be a Theresa Brewer—I can sing.

Mother is suspicious that the only thing I can do is talk and father shows amazement because I can think. If that's ability—I've got it. Sometimes I am surprised by how much ability I do have. And sometimes I am embarrassed because of abilities that I don't have. My eyes are sharper than my ears, and my fingers are more talented than my toes. I have talents, and I am beginning to find out what they are.

Are all these things mine?—Ability, time, possessions?

Of course they are. This is my day. I have had my legs since I was born. Let anybody try to take away my ring and there really will be a fight. What is mine is mine! I almost said—what is yours is mine too, if I can get it.

Did I get what I have by taking it from somebody else?

No! Nobody else ever had my tongue or my feet. My ring was bought, and my abilities have simply developed. The only things I have that anybody else ever had, were paid for. Father paid for them. He worked and got paid. He used his abilities. I use my abilities too and sometimes I get paid.

My possessions are simply abilities turned into cash or things. What I have is mine and I didn't take it from anybody else.

Did somebody give me these things?

I don't remember. I wasn't quite awake when I was born. I have been told that God gave me life and I guess he gave me today. He must have given me my talents too. If possessions are converted abilities, he gave me my possessions too. All that I am and all that I have I got from God. He gave me the earth to use.

Did God give me these things to keep forever?

Nobody else kept forever what He gave. I may be different, but I am not that different. Sometime I won't have today just as I don't now have yesterday or tomorrow. I will have no talents, no possessions. I can't believe that he takes these things back. Some of them he passes

on. Others he may give me in the new life that Christ makes possible for me in heaven with God.

What will I do with God's things while I have them?

That is like asking Jim what he will do with my tennis racket while he has it. It makes a lot of difference to me what Jim does with it. I gave it to him to use, and I expect to get it back without being ruined. If God gave me all that I am and all that I have, I better keep in mind what he will expect when these things are totally his again and not mine to use.

I had better serve Him with my possessions.

I had better glorify Him with my talents.

I had better honor Him with my body every day.

What did I do with the dollar I had last week?

Let's see! That was last week. Oh! I gave a quarter to church and ten cents to Luther League. That is the easiest to remember because I do that every week. I bought a thirty cent sundae. I can't do that every week though. Five cents went for chewing gum. I have saved thirty cents because next week I want to see that movie. I don't get to the movies as often since we have TV. That makes a dollar doesn't it?

What did I do with my shoes?

What shoes? Oh! those shoes I couldn't wear any longer. I gave them to Lutheran World Action. My mother gave the purple dress I outgrew too. I hated to give that dress up. It is one of the nicest ones I ever had. I really didn't give it up though. It is stored in a room in our house. Mother gave the guest room as a collection center for the next two months. In our house you can't be certain. What you see may be on its way to the church or to Africa tomorrow.

Why don't I like sweet potatoes?

That's easy. I ate too many. They weren't fried or boiled. They were spread on paper. I licked the paper. Somebody said the envelopes I was sealing one day at church were pasted with sweet potato

paste. The only time I eat sweet potatoes now is when I work at church. It is fun though.

I may be too young to be on the church council, but I am old enough to eat sweet potatoes in the room where the council meets. I have some times wondered if the pastor spends more time serving God than I do. I wonder if he should.

What is the most important thing I've ever done?

Who wants to know? I have asked the question and I guess I will have to answer it. But, I can't. God can, I suppose. I simply don't know. Perhaps I have never done anything really important. Sometime I hope to. God wants me to. It will have to be something that I am able to do. That means I must develop my talents and use them for God.

I don't know why I have asked myself all these questions. I don't have anything now that I didn't have before I asked them, unless—unless, what? Unless it is an understanding of stewardship. God gave me all that I have—and what I do with it is my stewardship. If I had nothing, I wouldn't be a steward. If I had given myself everything I have, I wouldn't be a steward. If I could keep what I have forever, I wouldn't be a steward.

It is because God made me and all that I have; it is because he continues to improve me and to increase what I have; it is because some day he will want to know what I have done with myself and all that he has given me; it is because of these things that I am a steward. It is because of these things that I must practice Christian stewardship.

Questions for discussion

1. Why is "what you have" more important than "what you don't have?"
2. If you had the power to do whatever you wanted to do, why wouldn't you turn today into yesterday or tomorrow? How long would you live if you had the choice?
3. What abilities would God like you to develop? What abilities would he like you to leave undeveloped? (Praying, stealing, singing, fighting, sewing, engineering, etc.)
4. If you can sell your bicycle for \$30, for how much would you sell your leg if you had

a buyer? Why are the things God has given you worth more than the things you have bought?

5. How would you feel if Jim gave Dot the tennis racket you had given him? Is God wrong when he expects us to consider him in our use of what he has given us?

6. How important to God are your possessions? Your abilities Your time?

7. How would you spend a dollar if you had it? Is twenty-five cents too much to give to the church?

8. How would you use a car to God's glory? How can a garbage can be used to God's glory

9. What can you do for the church? What other things are you able to do for God? How much time can you give?

10. Are the following true or false? Why?

(a) God cannot be very much interested in what he gives away. (False)

(b) A pastor gives his life to God but nobody else can afford to do that. (False)

(c) What may seem to be a little when one person gives it may be a lot when somebody else gives it. (True)

(d) A gift to God isn't really a gift unless it hurts the giver. (False)

(e) Each person has different things to give. (True)

(f) Money is all the church asks for or needs. (False)

(g) The church has a right to expect people to give a fair share of their money. (True)

(h) Many people are poor because of what they give the church. (False)

Worship helps

Hymns:

"May We Thy Precepts, Lord Fulfill"—No. 281 *P.S.H.*

"Take My Life, and Let It Be"—No. 278 *P.S.H.*

"O Christians! Leagued Together"—No. 294 *P.S.H.*

"Rise Up, O Men of God"—No. 289 *P.S.H.*

Scripture—II Corinthians 8: 1-7

Psalm 63—p. 37 *P.S.H.*

Prayer 32—p. 28 *P.S.H.*

Daily Bible readings

I Thessalonians 4: 9-12—God wants you to work with your hands; I Corinthians 4: 1-2—Stewards must be trustworthy; Luke 12: 48—Little from little and much from much; Luke 16: 10-13—A steward must be faithful; I Corinthians 16: 1-2—Saving to give; II Corinthians 9: 7—Cheerful giving; and II Corinthians 10: 15—Generosity is rewarded.

Gratitude or Greed?



A round-the-world look at Thanksgiving

By Alton N. Allbeck

EQUIPMENT needed: A large map of the world or a globe, a spotlight, letters in the word "thanksgiving," a blackboard and chalk, scotch tape, a flashlight, and a cross.

GETTING your props ready: Cut the letters spelling the word "thanksgiving" out of construction paper or cardboard. They should be sturdy enough to stand, if you plan to mount them on a globe. Pick a color that can be easily seen.

Arrange the globe so that it may be seen without difficulty by every member of your audience. If you plan to use the map, mount it on a sturdy frame of some sort. Make sure that it isn't too high for easy visibility.

YOUR PROGRAM plans: For the worship service, place the cross before the map or globe. To get a more dramatic effect, you might spotlight the cross so that it casts a shadow on the map or globe. Experiment until you achieve the best lighting for this purpose.

Remove the cross for the presentation of

the program. Then let your room be in darkness except for the spotlight shining on the map or globe, and the flashlight that the speakers will need.

You may present the program in one of several ways. If you have a large league, and want a lot of members participating, let one leaguer tell or read the opening and closing part. Then use as many leaguers as possible to tell or read the 12 brief descriptions. One person should be asked to scotch tape the letters on the globe or map at the beginning of each of the 12 descriptions.

Three people will be needed to create the best program effect, if your league is small. One person attaches the letters on the map or globe. Another reads or tells the opening and closing part of the topic. The third tells or reads the brief descriptions. You may, of course, alternate speakers on the descriptions, rather than letting one do them all.

The speakers should stand out of eye range of the audience. Behind the group would be a good place. Allow a short time to pass between each description. The pause will add

dramatic effect to the program, as well as let the audience know you are going to talk about another country.

Practice this program with your lighting arrangement before you give it, so that there will be no hitches and everyone will know what he is to do and just when his part comes in the presentation.

The program

THANKSGIVING is an American holiday, celebrated in Canada in October and in the United States in November. Of course, if I were to ask you to name the things you were thankful for, you could rattle off a dozen items in a minute. We rich, powerful Canadians and Americans have so much, that it is very, very easy to be grateful.

Yet as we look around the world, at the Arabs in Palestine, for instance, and the peoples of Korea and of Germany—many of them destitute, without homes, and with no future we begin to wonder. Suppose the people of these countries were to observe Thanksgiving. What would be on their lists of blessings? Good homes? No. A lot of folk crowd in one or two rooms, or live in a bombed out home, or in a crowded camp. And there are refugees who have no homes.

Could they count among their blessings food? Perhaps. Turkey, fresh vegetables, milk, a table groaning with our Thanksgiving food? No. Many children and adults around the globe are hungry much of the time.

Well, what about family—father, mother, brothers, and sisters. No—not that. In the last 15 years thousands and thousands of children have been orphaned by the wars. Others have been separated from parents and sped to zones of safety away from the Communist threat.

Good schools? Again, no. You would be considered well educated if you graduated from high school in some nations.

Well, what then is there to thank God for? What do these people prize? Let me tell you. On this map (*or globe*) we shall point out 14 countries. Together we shall explore them to see how people

live and what conditions exist. On these areas we shall place the letters of the word "thanksgiving." Perhaps then you will learn what is so precious to these people who live in these nations.

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This **T** reminds us of our church in Tanganyika, a country on the east coast of Africa. You probably picture the people in Tanganyika as primitive African savages, living in round mud and grass huts in the jungle. Don't be fooled. This may be true of some of them. But the natives who live in Christian villages have built homes just like yours. Nor do they spend their time head-hunting. These colored people are merchants, farmers, mechanics, locksmiths, carpenters, pastors, and architects. They are becoming an educated people.

Our Lutheran church has a large mission field here staffed by missionaries from the United States, Canada and Europe. These missionaries, however, do not need to provide leadership for the local churches. Just as in the Christian villages, the colored people—their pastors and congregational leaders, work together to run the churches. On Sundays thousands of people attend the Lutheran services in Tanganyika.

These natives are grateful to the Christian missionaries for telling them about Christ, for providing schools and medical care for children and adults, for helping the Negro assert and develop his leadership abilities, and for showing them a new way of life.

•
This **H** is placed on the Holy Land, also known as Palestine or Israel.

Today the Holy land is a troubled country, with bitter struggles between the Jews and Arabs who inhabit it. Fighting between Jews and Arabs flares up from time to time. Many people are very poor. In tent camps in the Holy Land live thousands and thousands of Arabs, some of them Christian. They cannot leave the camps. And they have little work to do. It is a discouraging, hopeless way to live.

Our church is aiding the Arabs—both Christian and Moslem. About a million

of them have worn clothing donated by Lutherans in Europe, the United States and Canada through Lutheran World Relief. Food is given, too. At Lutheran clinics and hospitals many many people are treated. The only test of these gifts and services is whether there is a need. And there are Lutheran churches, orphanages, and an elementary school in the Holy Land.

In these times of tension, many Christian Arabs have little to be thankful for. This is especially true of those crowded in the tent camps. Yet they look forward with hope and thanks to God for their faith and for the life after this. And they are grateful for the gifts given to them by Christians in other parts of the world.

Now we go to Argentina on the east coast of South America. The Argentine people are Roman Catholic in name only. Not more than five per cent of the people are Christian—either Roman Catholic or Protestant—in any real sense. At least 95 per cent never so much as go to church. It is actually an unchurched nation.

Many of these people are hungry for the gospel. For this reason the Lutheran Church of Argentina is growing, slowly and steadily. Missionaries are at work. And our church is educating young Argentinians to become pastors.

The public schools in large parts of the country are very poor. The Roman Catholic church, rather than improving schools, fights education for the people as a whole. In certain sections most people get only three or four years of schooling. In other areas of Argentina, young people attend high school, but do not graduate. So they are eager for schooling. In Buenos Aires, for instance, many Roman Catholics and atheists want to attend the Lutheran grade and high school there, simply because it is a better school than the public schools.

In a nation where people are eager to learn about Jesus Christ our Lutheran church has a big job to do. The young Argentinians particularly are groping for a faith. They would welcome the chance

to learn about the Christian faith.

If you would ask a Christian in this country what he would put on a list of blessings he would probably reply, "My very real faith, and the freedom in Argentina to spread the gospel."

On the northeastern coast of South America is British Guiana. We shall place this N there for the town of New Amsterdam in British Guiana. Our Lutheran church has established congregations in New Amsterdam, in Georgetown, and small missions deep in jungle territory.

Here is another country where there is political unrest and struggle, aroused by the Communists. But so far this tension has not had too much effect on the members of our Lutheran church. Nor has it hindered work of the missionaries and native pastors.

The people of British Guiana originally came from many other parts of the world. A lot of them, particularly those belonging to the Lutheran church, came from India. Young people of this country have little schooling. Most rural families are very poor, living in tiny grass homes in villages, along the river, and in the countryside.

More Lutheran churches are needed in British Guiana, and many more missionaries.

The Christian people of this country are grateful for the church that teaches them about Christ. They are glad, too, that the church provides schools to which their children can go and that gradually they are learning a new and better way of life.

Christians of Korea, indeed all people in this small nation, have immense problems. Peace has come to Korea, after three years of war. But a peace in which, like Germany, the country is divided. A line has been drawn across Korea. On one side stand the armies of the Communists. On the other, the armies of the United Nations. At the first command both are ready to take up arms again.

In the midst of this armed truce the Koreans are struggling to rebuild their

country. Fighting destroyed their homes. Children were orphaned and deserted. Cities buried in debris. Churches bombed and wrecked. People have little food and no fuel in a mountainous, cold country. It is the same story of any land where a war has been fought.

Lutheran World Relief has shipped tons of clothing and food for distribution to those in greatest need.

Yes, there are Christians in Korea—over a million of them. Before sunrise thousands of them with warm hearts go daily to their cold, gutted churches to pray for the restoration of their divided nation, and the return of peace and prosperity. We can pray for these courageous Christians, too, and for the return of peace and for freedom in all countries of the world.

Let's go now to Southern India. If you were an average teen-ager in India, you would be proud of your modern cities, the new industries, fine hospitals, and the growing number of schools. You would work hard. But you would probably not know how to read or write. Few Indian people go to school—there are just not enough schools to educate all the youth.

You probably would not have a job—they are scarce. You would live in a small home, with bare rooms. And the money that your family earned in one year would add up to about \$59.

In Southern India are located the two largest missions of our United Lutheran Church. One is at Rajahmundry, and the other at Guntur. Strangely enough, in this the biggest of all United Lutheran Church missions fields, missions work goes on with great difficulty.

Only a few years ago India gained its independence from Great Britain. The people became proud nationalists. They do not like any foreign interference in their country. And the Indian government frowns on missionaries who try to convert the people to Christianity. It is all right to teach the Indian people in the Christian schools—but not to teach them about Jesus Christ. Yet there are many

Christian works and much Christian influence in this country.

In spite of these difficulties, the Lutheran Church of India is growing. Wise missionaries have trained Indians who belong to the Lutheran church to assume leadership in the congregations. These missionaries from the U. S. and Canada who go there now work under the direction of the Indian church leaders, largely in the villages among the unchurched.

If the door is ever closed to our American missionaries in India, the Lutheran Church will be strong, and continue to spread the gospel.

We shall place this G over the western part of Germany. After World War II Germany was divided. The East Zone is now occupied by soldiers of the Russian army—and is controlled by Communists. But the West Zone has been occupied by the armies of Great Britain, France, and the United States—and there is freedom.

Like many other war-torn countries of the world the people of the West Zone of Germany have faced tremendous problems. Besides the people who already live in Germany millions of refugees have poured into the Western Zone. There are people of Europe who have been expelled from their own countries or have fled from the Communists. Somehow these people have to be fed, clothed, and sheltered. They seek two things: Freedom, and a chance to begin life again in another country.

Through the Lutheran World Federation—an organization formed by Lutherans in countries all over the world—we have been able to aid these homeless people. Some have been sent to other countries, like Canada, Australia, South America, and the United States to live. Those still in Germany are being cared for in refugee camps.

The German people themselves have had to shake off the results of a devastating war. Rebuild homes, and cities. Shape a new government that would not enslave its people in a dictatorship, like Hitler's.

From the Lutheran people of the world

have come tons and tons of clothing for the German people, and the refugees. Food and medicine have been given. Spiritual aid has been ministered.

And the Lutheran Church of Germany has helped its people both in body and spirit. What have Christians in the West Zone to be thankful for? FREEDOM in capital letters, faith that has helped them weather terrible suffering, and Christians in other countries who have given out of love in time of need.

Indonesia, composed of the Philippine Islands, the East Indies, and the Malay Archipelago, boasts a strong young Lutheran Church. But here in this area it is not easy to be a Christian. In one community, for instance, Mohammedans recently asked that the Christians renounce their faith. Eight Christians refused. They were killed.

Though in some areas there is persecution, the Lutheran Church of Indonesia holds promise for the future. Through Lutheran World Action our gifts have helped this church. Last year, for example, money was given to build and equip a small hospital, to buy badly needed supplies, and to send evangelists into areas where the gospel has not spread. Some youth from Indonesia were sent to Europe and to America to study.

Let us remember this strong young church in our prayers that it may continue to spread the gospel unhindered.

From Indonesia we go to Venezuela in South America. Here is another country, like Argentina, where the people are largely Roman Catholic. But there are Lutherans, too. The Lutheran church is growing. Many Lutheran refugees from Europe who in World War II were expelled from their homelands, or left for fear of the Communists since the war, have settled in Venezuela. And through the Lutheran World Federation, pastors and leaders have been sent to this country to help establish Lutheran congregations. Many fine people have come from distant shores, leaving homes, families and memories of better days. They are grate-

ful for the help their fellow churchmen are giving, and thankful that in a strange land they can find the church.

Our next letter **I** stands for Iron Curtain countries. These are the lands in eastern Europe, like Poland, Latvia, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary, now in the grip of the Communists. Little news comes from the Lutheran churches and people in these countries. What news that is permitted to pass the Iron Curtain certainly does not show the true picture.

Churches are permitted to hold services—but the Communists tell the pastors and church leaders what they must say, and how they must lead their people. Some of our Lutheran leaders have been imprisoned for daring to speak against the Red rule.

Christians in these countries live in fear—fear that someone in their families will be seized by police for saying something against the Communist government. Some have left their homes, to try to escape to Western Germany or other countries where the Communists are not in power.

Like Christians around the globe who are living in terror these people are given hope and comfort by their faith. Some defy the Communists by standing for their Christian principles. When we see what is happening to Christian people like the Czechs, the Poles, the Hungarians, and the Letts, we can be humbly glad for our own freedom to live and worship as we choose.

This **N** will be placed over the city of Nagoya, in Japan. Nagoya was one of many Japanese cities bombed during the war. Its churches were destroyed. But last year, a mission chapel was dedicated there. It was the last of the Lutheran church buildings, destroyed by the war, to be replaced.

Now the Lutheran Church of Japan has entered a new period of outreach and expansion. Japanese Lutheran pastors, and many missionaries from the United States and Canada are building a strong church.

We can be thankful that our gifts have helped the Lutheran Church in Japan. But even more, we are thankful that though war brought destruction, the faith of the Japanese Christians was not destroyed.

The last **G** stands for Germany—the East Zone. If you were a Christian teenager in this section today—under the Communist rule—you would live in fear. If you hung on to your faith, you might not be allowed to go to school—you would be dismissed, or asked to leave voluntarily.

You would probably belong to a Christian youth group. Some times your group could not meet—the Communists would prevent it. To stop Christian youth meetings, the Communist police use such methods as turning their police dogs on the young people as they gather for a session. And you might not own a Bible—Bibles are scarce since the Communists control the printing presses and paper.

You would be bombarded with propaganda from the Reds. They are eager to indoctrinate every youth in Communism. In school you would be compelled to write several themes a week against the Americans, against the church, condemning Jesus Christ, praising the Communist Party. You would have to answer political questions in class. You would know that you were lying—so would the teacher. But your teacher is also a Christian and you both must pretend. Everywhere, every minute, fear, suspicion, tension.

If you got enough of this unending pressure, you would probably weaken and accept the Communist Party propaganda.

If you were a Lutheran youth in the East Zone of Germany, what would you thank God for? For the slender thread that still holds you to your faith. For Christian parents. For the fellowship of Christian youth who dare to defy the Communists.

Our tour of countries around the world is complete. But what about you? You

can be grateful for freedom and a lot more. Of course, you can thank God for your faith. But—I wonder. Would you go to a Luther League meeting if you knew the police would set dogs on you? Could you sing praises to God if you were homeless and hungry? Would you refuse to give up your faith if you knew you would be killed if you didn't? I wonder—how much of a beating could your Christian faith take?

Turn up the lights, and place the blackboard before the group. Now your leader should say something like this:

You probably noticed in our tour how much help from Christians who have much to share, has gone unendingly to needy people and churches. Food, clothing, money, medicine, teachers, doctors, missionaries, supplies, pastors—the list is long. Let's see how many ways we can list on the board through which we can show our thanks to God by helping people not quite so blessed—in material things—as we are. We don't want to stop by just saying, "Thanks, God." Let's go into action. From this list let's select two or three projects that our league might carry out.

Your list might include: Praying for Christians in the trouble spots of the world; learning more about missions in other countries; writing to young people in Europe and in countries where our United Lutheran Church has missionaries; gather new and old clothing for Lutheran World Relief; take a special offering for Lutheran World Action; make some Christian decorations for the trays of patients in a local hospital; give a Thanksgiving basket to a needy family—and include an invitation for them to attend your church.

Service of worship

Using the *Christian Youth Hymnal*
Hymn No. 175

Psalm 121, page 355

Scripture Reading: Luke 17:11-19

Hymn No. 163

Topic

Prayer

Hymn No. 242

Benediction



Fourth candle of Advent wreath is lit, marking the last Sunday in Advent.

Who Is Coming?

How to get ready for the birthday of the Christ-child and not for the appearance of Santa Claus

By Rachel C. Wahlberg

WHAT do you do if you are expecting a visitor in your home? If it is a person whom you love, your grandfather or a close friend of yours, you try to plan ahead for the visit. You may give up your room for the guest to use. Mother plans the menus, remembering the friend's special likes and dislikes. Maybe you plan something special for that person.

You are *getting ready* for that person. That is Advent—a getting-ready period for a big event. The big event is Jesus' birth.

Advent means *coming*. The fact that Jesus is coming is more exciting, more thrilling, than having an earthly guest. Why? Because the babe whose birth we celebrate grew up to be our Saviour. And

the story of the gospel, Christ's giving himself for our salvation, is the most thrilling event of all history!

You may wonder how our church came to have a time of preparation called Advent. . . .

The events and seasons of the church year have developed through many centuries. Christmas itself was not widely observed in the church until the fourth century. Late in that same century, the Advent season of preparation for Christmas originated in France. Soon the idea spread to other countries. In some places six or seven Sundays were included. But the Roman church later established the four-Sunday season which we observe.

The church's New Year

This is the "New Year" season of the church year. It was probably not until the thirteenth century that Advent was recog-

nized as the *beginning* of the church year. Up until that time the year had begun with the Annunciation or with Christmas.

The church year begins by picturing the drama of redemption. The themes of Advent are:

The coming of Christ as a babe,

His second advent, when he shall reign over the earth,
and

His continual coming into the hearts that "prepare him room."

Through the year, God's plan is worked out. Sunday after Sunday we recall the life of Christ, the birth of the church. In this way, the year develops as if *we* were experiencing it for the first time, as though it were all for you and me. Isn't that dramatic? We receive personal contact with the great events of Christian history.

So, in Advent, the church year begins with waiting, believing, expecting. Whom are we expecting? Our Savior, yet to be born—and yet we know that we are already redeemed. But it is only through this atmosphere of preparing, that we receive the full effect of the spirit of the season.

Advent is the time of spiritual preparation for Christmas that Lent is for Easter. At first Advent had the sorrowful character of Lent. It was observed with strict fast. No marriages were performed. But this effort for a strict penitential observance was not successful, although Advent is still considered a season of prayer and self-examination. The violet color used in the church during the season indicates this.

In a way, Advent is like the long ages in which the Jews eagerly awaited the Messiah. As we wait for Jesus' birthday, our thoughts are not just of a babe nor of just an anniversary. We approach Christmas day as part of a completed plan. We look ahead to the whole story of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection.

Man, the sinner, is put away from God, condemned by sin, lost. BUT we are rescued not by what we do but because of God's mercy. We can peep at the ending of the book—Christ is our salvation!

Your King comes

Each of the four Sundays has its purpose:

The first Sunday's gospel lesson is like the voice of a herald, "Behold, thy King cometh unto thee . . ." Up, therefore, prepare for his coming, to meet, to greet him! Are we getting ready for his birth?

The teaching of the first Sunday is our Lord's first coming, in the flesh. The second Sunday teaches his second coming in judgment to establish his eternal kingdom. "And then shall they see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." The object in describing these comings is to show us how simply, yet irresistibly, God develops and unfolds his eternally planned purpose.

The first Advent, the historic fact of Christ's birth, lies behind us. The second Advent, his final coming with power and glory "as a thief in the night," lies before us. Is this not a reason to be thoughtful and prayerful during this season?

On the third Sunday in Advent the gospel tells us about the great messenger, John the Baptist, "of whom it is written: Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." John bids us "prepare—repent."

How to prepare

How are we to prepare? First with gladness, suggests the introit. "Rejoice in the Lord alway." "The Lord is at hand." Second, in holy thinking. "Let your moderation, gentleness be known to all men . . . in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Thanksgiving that God has fulfilled his promise of a Messiah!

As John was the preacher of the preparation in those days, so the church places him before us in the role of God's herald. The King who is to come again still has preachers of the preparation who are his ministers. So our active worship in this period is important. As believers in Jesus we too are his messengers!

The last of the Sundays in Advent shouts that the great day is at hand. All is expectation. The church bursts forth in

wondrous song, "Drop down, ye heavens . . . let the earth open and bring forth salvation!" The introit reaches far ahead to the cross-crowned hill and God's victory through his son.

Surrender to the king

Thus the season leads us forth to meet him who cometh.

Why is it good to have a period like the four weeks of Advent, in which we anticipate the joy of Christmas? During that time we can get ready for him in several ways:

1. Prepare our hearts to receive him.
2. Review our actions, daily habits, in light of his coming.
3. Make plans to celebrate Christmas with Christ as center.
4. Study our influence, the circle of our family and friends, with the purpose of helping others to center their lives in Christ.

We need to follow the herald's cry, "Make straight the way of the Lord" . . . "O come to my heart, Lord Jesus."

We need to feel the same unworthiness and humility that John did when he said, "The thong of whose sandal I am not worthy to untie."

We need to feel this empty of self.

We need to surrender to him, that we may "to Bethlehem hasten, to worship the Lord!"

Bible readings

First Sunday: Rom. 13:11-14, and Matt. 21:1-9

Second Sunday: Rom. 15:4-13, and Luke 21:25-36

Third Sunday: I Cor. 4:1-5, and Matt. 11:2-10

Fourth Sunday: Phil. 4:4-7, and John 1:9-28

Discussion

1. Name the seasons of the church year. (Consult *Common Service Book*.)
2. To what other season can Advent be compared?
3. Do we have any John the Baptists today? In what way are we John the Baptists?
4. Why is Advent like the first chapter in a book?
5. In our Christian year, is more time given to important festivals (Easter, Ascension, Reformation) or more to periods of spir-

itual preparations? Why

6. Are you familiar with Robert Burns' "The Cotter's Saturday Night?" Tell about it.

Project ideas

1. One group of leaguers collects during the year the burned-down candles from the altar. During a November meeting they melt the candle bits and make paper-cup devotional candles out of them. Then these candles are distributed to families for use in family devotions during Advent. Or the same idea could be carried out by buying four small candles for each family, one for use each week in Advent.

2. Plan a friendly program for a children's hospital. Try to accent the expectant spirit of Advent, instead of the commercial "give-me" attitudes which most children have acquired.

Self-rating questions

1. Why do I look forward to Christmas? (Rate these answers. Are there others? Which should come first?)

To receive gifts

To plan presents for others

To go Christmas shopping

For the school holidays

For the fun of parties

For the church programs and carol singing

For the spiritual thrill of Christ's birth

2. In my home—

Is Santa the central figure or is Christ?

Do we sing carols and read the pre-Christmas stories?

Do we plan unselfish gifts for others?

Does holiday preparation push aside spiritual preparation?

3. In what ways can I influence my family to have a more Christian Advent? My friends? My city?

Worship

Use the "Service for Advent" on pages 310-312 of the *Christian Youth Hymnal*. Select hymns from these numbered one through five in the Advent section of the *Christian Youth Hymnal*.

You may wish to use the following prayer:

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the way of thine only-begotten Son, so that by his coming we may be enabled to serve thee with pure minds, and dedicated lives. Amen.

In the *Parish School Hymnal*, hymns for Advent are numbered one through 12. Select several for your service. Psalms eight or 145, in the *Parish School Hymnal* are suitable. Also you may use the canticle entitled "Magnificat" found on page 14.



Everybody's Looking at Me

Wishing won't make you stop blushing, or feel self-confident, or talk easily. To gain poise you need to know how...and then to practice it.

By Earl T. Knaus, Jr.

AS you present your topic introduce it in such a way that everyone who has or has had self-conscious feelings knows that these are what the topic is about. You might start with a kind of reading taken from the opening paragraphs of the article. If you do this, or ask someone else to do it, it should be well-rehearsed!

Set the stage for the reading by telling your leaguers that you are going to

explore the world within each of them. Then turn down the lights and spotlight the reader. He should read rather quietly just as if he were talking to himself about himself and others. Another way to give the dramatic reading is to dim the lights. Then let the reader read from behind a screen, or over a public address system.

Continue your program by asking if everyone has had the feeling of self-consciousness described in the opening reading. Then make sure that each leaguer has a copy of the self-rating

charts, and speak about the purpose of these charts. Be certain everyone understands how to use them. Then let all the members of your league write their answers to the first two charts.

Talk next about the ideas in the section entitled "First Steps toward Poise." Before you use the third self-rating chart show how it is supposed to help your leaguers find definite, practical ways that they can go about developing the desirable traits of self-confidence and self-reliance.

End your program by citing Paul the apostle as an example of a man who had great assurance and self-confidence. The material under the heading "When Christ Takes Over" may be used as your guide in closing the topic. Show how Christ in our lives makes all the difference in really becoming mature people of poise, peace, and power. Try to get the group to give other examples, for instance, Martin Luther. Indicate that this is what the Church can mean to us: The place in which the victorious power of the Christ is available.

Using the charts

The material in the topic is built around the three self-rating charts. The purpose of the first two charts is to help young people rate themselves in self-confidence and self-reliance. Although these two traits are related, a person need not rate the same on the charts of both traits.

The answers on the self-confident quiz are these: Odd-numbered items, true; even-numbered items, false. The score is the total number of items marked in agreement with these answers. You can compare the scores with the following ratings: 25 to 18, high (upper 25 per cent); 17 to 11, average (middle 50 per cent); 10 down, low (lower 25 per cent).

The answers on the self-reliant quiz are these: True—1, 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 13, 14, 17, 18, 21, 22, 25; False—3, 4, 7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 16, 19, 20, 23, 24. The score is the total number of items marked in agreement with these answers. You can compare the scores with the following

ratings: 25 to 20 high (upper 25 per cent); 19 to 14, average (middle 50 per cent); 13 down, low (lower 25 per cent).

The third quiz on how to gain self-confidence and self-reliance is planned to help young people think about how they might develop these two valuable traits.

It ought to be clearly understood that these self-rating charts are only aids to helping leaguers know themselves better. Such charts are not the final solution to feelings of self-consciousness. So the charts may not be equally useful to everyone. They may prove too difficult for some to use profitably. Or they may not touch deeply enough the complex and difficult problems of others. Consequently they should not be completely depended upon.

The topic

ISN'T it strange how the world inside of you can be so topsy-turvy when the world outside of you appears so peaceful and harmless? Wouldn't it be shocking if you could turn yourself inside-out and clearly see the fearful, and sometimes weird ideas and emotions that lurk inside of you? All of us have them. Maybe they are the reasons why we don't always wear our hearts on our sleeves. And why we keep for our private moments the secrets of our inner selves. We find it best to keep a wide, wide gap between ourselves and others. We become very shy and not sure of ourselves if we get too close to others because we feel ashamed. Or maybe we are afraid. And when you aren't sure of yourself, you are not at ease.

Perhaps you are about to go on your first date, or go out with a friend for a special purpose. You have looked forward eagerly to the big event. But deep down feelings of fear and embarrassment haunt you. You stammer and hesitate as you talk with your friend. You blush and fidget. Maybe you walk down to the corner drugstore for a coke, or go to see a movie. But when you get there, you feel extremely embarrassed because you are afraid you do not look

as neat as you should in that place. You are not sure that your manners and clothes fit the occasion.

You anxiously prepared for this date for a long time. You thought through in some detail just what you might say, and just how you would act. But when you try to remember the nice things you planned to do and say, your ideas are frozen within you. And there is no way to thaw them out. You become a little panicky. Your tongue hangs heavily silent. You blush instead of speaking. If only the ground would swallow you up. Or if you were just safely home all by yourself. But you suspect that this would not really solve your problems.

As you walk down the street you feel that a number of people you notice out of the corner of your eye are looking at you. This idea shuts out every thought in your mind. You wonder if they're laughing. Casually you try to turn your head and glance at them. But your lack of poise betrays you. You stumble and almost fall against a passerby. You fumblingly make some excuse and hurry on acutely embarrassed and mad at yourself.

In almost everything you do you want to compare yourself with others, often in ways that will not help you improve yourself. Even though you're anxious about what others may think of you, you are your own most harsh and severe critic. Sometimes you almost hate yourself because you don't think you look as nice as a certain person you admire, or speak as well as someone else, or have the quiet confidence of a friend. You are terribly conscious of a changing voice or your changing body. You spend a great deal of time wondering and worrying about this thing called sex.

So you stumble through the first date, or whatever big occasion it is. And the world within rages with stormy feelings. You don't feel safe—you feel you aren't as good as other teen-agers—and you're angry. You are sure everybody is looking at you, and probably laughing. And you feel terribly hurt and bitterly angry.

Such self-consciousness and concern is a miserable feeling. Have you experi-

enced it? Let's try to measure ourselves to see if we can locate on the following two charts specific points in our lack of self-confidence and reliance. (*Here use chart one and two.*)

First steps towards poise

Once you have found the causes of your troublesome feelings of self-consciousness, either by digging deep enough into your own experience, or talking it over frankly with a wise Christian friend, you can proceed to do something about it.

The psychologists tell us that one of the basic facts about life is that personality traits are learned. So they may be greatly changed. If you are not as self-confident as you want to be, you can improve by deliberately setting goals for yourself and deliberately working at them. Maybe you should serve on more committees, or take more responsibility in your Luther League. You might take part in more social affairs. In these ways you could build up your confidence to do things you were once afraid to try.

The only way you will ever learn to swim is to go someday into the water. On the following chart are some practical suggestions for wading in to gain self-confidence and self-reliance.

When Christ takes over

If you have ever tried to overcome your self-consciousness you probably found it was not very easy. To start with we are often blind to our own defects. We find many ways to excuse our mistakes. We have to be willing to change in order to change. Knowing our need is not enough. Sometimes we just don't *want* to improve the ways we think and feel and act. We are too afraid or satisfied, too smug or too conceited. So we go on being little children when we ought to grow up. As much as we know about what we should do and how we should do it, and as hard as we sometimes try, we just can't make the grade alone.

But then, nobody asked us or expected us to go it alone. Certainly God doesn't. That's why Jesus came. And that's why his church still exists on earth. Through

Christ and in his church God freely offers the benefit of his Almighty power for the solution of our problems. So maybe for Christians, it is not finally so much a matter of *self*-confidence and *self*-reliance, as it is first a matter of *Christ*-confidence and *Christ*-reliance.

In some letters he wrote to his Christian friends the Apostle Paul said: "Though I have done much, yet it was not I who did it, but the grace of God which was with me. I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. It is God who works in me both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God's grace is sufficient for me. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

If we want to really grow up into the stature of Christ, Christ will have to grow up in us. There are many things we can do to quiet the storm of the world within. But if, through faith and prayer, we let Christ on board our lives we have a pilot to guide and strengthen us when we ourselves are unable to do even what we know we should do. In the fellowship of the Church where God himself

is present can be found the power of the victorious Christ. This power will move us to want to make those self-improvements that overcome our miserable feelings of self-consciousness.

Project

Ask every leaguer in your group to willingly commit himself to a three-fold project for developing his confidence and reliance. First, to be honest about his own needs and growth. Perhaps each one could keep a record of what he needs to do, and how far he succeeds over a definite period of time.

Second, if he has any special or acute feeling about this whole subject, ask the leaguer to counsel with his pastor or some wise and mature Christian.

Third, each leaguer should strengthen his personal devotional life and church attendance so that his faith can mean all it should in his life as a maturing person.

Worship suggestions

Call to worship

Hymn: "Jesus, Lover of my soul," *CYH* 190, *PSH* 260

Scripture: Luke 2: 39-52. Ephesians 6: 10-18

Prayer: Collects, *CYH* 46—51, *PSH* 35-41

Hymn: "My Faith looks up to Thee"

Silent Prayer.

Chart One—How Self-Confident Am I?

("T" stands for true, and "F" for false. Circle the one that applies to you.)

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. Starting a conversation with a stranger is easy for me. |
| T | F | 2. I dislike getting up stunts to put life into a party. |
| T | F | 3. I never become extremely excited about a situation. |
| T | F | 4. Making up my mind is usually hard for me. |
| T | F | 5. I make a point to meet important persons. |
| T | F | 6. I think I am a shy person. |
| T | F | 7. The presence of important people does not make me self-conscious. |
| T | F | 8. Criticism usually makes me feel badly. |
| T | F | 9. I rarely feel nervous. |
| T | F | 10. It does not take much to make me blush. |
| T | F | 11. Seldom do I feel just miserable. |
| T | F | 12. When others disagree with me I feel discouraged. |
| T | F | 13. It takes more than praise to convince me I am succeeding. |
| T | F | 14. I often go out of my way to avoid meeting someone. |
| T | F | 15. I usually solve my problems without help. |
| T | F | 16. Others seem to want to take advantage of me. |
| T | F | 17. I do not experience feelings of inferiority. |
| T | F | 18. A good sales talk makes it hard for me to say "No." |
| T | F | 19. My feelings are not easily hurt. |
| T | F | 20. Many times I have ups and downs of mood. |
| T | F | 21. I would not mind making an important speech in public. |
| T | F | 22. I get stage fright easily. |

- T F 23. Having someone watch me work does not disturb me.
 T F 24. Scoffing and teasing make me uncertain of myself.
 T F 25. I think I am very self-confident.

Chart Two—How Self-Reliant Am I?

("T" stands for true, and "F" for false. Circle the one that applies to you.)

- T F 1. I enjoy spending a few hours by myself.
 T F 2. My most difficult problems I prefer to study out by myself.
 T F 3. I try to match the success of other people.
 T F 4. In a difficult situation I do not like to take a chance alone.
 T F 5. When I am ill I prefer to get along without company.
 T F 6. When I feel "down" I do not seek someone to cheer me.
 T F 7. I welcome advice when I make plans or work on hard jobs.
 T F 8. I often seek company when I feel sad.
 T F 9. I prefer not to share my responsibilities with others.
 T F 10. If I feel I am needed, I am always inclined to help.
 T F 11. I often feel a need to be with other people.
 T F 12. I do not like to make important decisions for myself.
 T F 13. I do not need close supervision to keep me hard at work.
 T F 14. My political and social views are fairly liberal.
 T F 15. I usually seek advice when in difficulty.
 T F 16. I much prefer to work with others than by myself.
 T F 17. When thinking through important plans I seldom seek advice.
 T F 18. My best qualities are not brought out by being part of a group.
 T F 19. Games and sports interest me much more than books.
 T F 20. I have difficulty in becoming completely absorbed in my work.
 T F 21. Generally I can get more ideas from books than from discussion.
 T F 22. Asking questions of the speaker at a meeting does not embarrass me.
 T F 23. Working very long in a solitary place would bother me.
 T F 24. A group party entertains me much more than books or movies.
 T F 25. I would not mind assuming responsibility for a companion while traveling.

Chart Three—How Can I Gain in Self-Confidence, Self-Reliance

Doing the things checked in the list below would help me gain in:

	Self- Conf.	Self- Rel.	I Do Now	Plan To Do
Keep my clothes clean, wear them neatly	_____	_____	_____	_____
Care for my body, keep it healthy, well-groomed ...	_____	_____	_____	_____
Express my ideas in good language	_____	_____	_____	_____
Cultivate a pleasant speaking voice	_____	_____	_____	_____
Be well-informed on important news, sports	_____	_____	_____	_____
Join heartily in my school activity program	_____	_____	_____	_____
Treat others fairly, refrain from gossip	_____	_____	_____	_____
Exhibit polite manners, never "show off"	_____	_____	_____	_____
Be generous, avoid angry or hateful behaviour	_____	_____	_____	_____
Think for myself as far as possible	_____	_____	_____	_____
Discuss difficult problems with wise advisers	_____	_____	_____	_____
Be open-minded to good suggestions	_____	_____	_____	_____
Support programs for community progress	_____	_____	_____	_____
Take gains in my progress well in my stride	_____	_____	_____	_____
Try to be clean-minded, right-minded, cheerful ...	_____	_____	_____	_____

The above charts from *Better Ways of Growing Up* by Crawford and Woodward are reprinted by permission of The Muhlenberg Press.



Italian sculptor, D. Mastroianni, modeled this scene of John the Baptist in wax.

The Man Who Lost His Head

A powerful preacher, John the Baptist dared to speak out against evil. For this he was killed.

By J. David Mumford

ONE group of junior high boys and girls who were interested in puppets developed several short plays to present the story of John the Baptist. Keeping their scenery simple and their costumes plain they were able to use a number of their puppets for several parts. Not only did they learn a great deal themselves but they were also able to present their plays to younger children in the Sunday school and Vacation Church

School. Your public library has books on making puppets.

Perhaps your league would be interested in such a project. If you are, be sure to keep to the main streams of the story. Don't go off on the minor themes in such a way that the real place and work of John is lost in the confusion.

Write your script to indicate the action. Go over it carefully with the operators and let them then tell the story in their own words. This spontaneous dialogue can be of great interest.

To the leader

You are responsible for doing your best. That means you must give prayer, and thought, and care to the presentation of this topic. Anything less than your best is unworthy of your faith in Jesus Christ.

So plan your program well ahead of time. Don't wait until the day before it's due and then try to make up for lost time. If you work in that fashion you will never do your best. Read all the material carefully. Contact the leaguers you want to help in your program. Give them their materials in plenty of time. Insist that they work with you in the spirit of service for Christ.

This topic has been planned so that it will be interesting to you and your group. The topic is to serve as your guide and your chief source of background material. But please go over it so well you can present it freely.

In your presentation and discussion talk *with* the leaguers, don't just read *at* them. Use your imagination to depict the scenes given in the scripture lessons and the topic material. Help your league explore the truth and grow in understanding.

Leading a topic can be an exciting adventure in faith and service. So do your best and God will help you find that thrill in your own experience.

The project for a puppet show, however, is an idea for service that may grow out of the presentation you give. So the topic material here has been developed for your use in an ordinary league meeting.

John the Baptist is a most interesting character. Your job will be to share that interest with your league. Questions for discussion—and their suggested answers

—are included after each of the main incidents. You will find this punctuates the story and creates general interest and participation.

A number of questions on baptism are included because it is important for us to appreciate the sacrament intelligently. Unfortunately many sects create confusion about baptism because they insist on modes and methods that are actually unimportant details.

The final section on the characteristics of John, and the Bible references you will find with them, may be used for deeper research, for practice in finding scriptural passages, or as a means of gaining wider participation in your group.

An evil promise

SILENCE hung heavy in the great dining hall. Here and there a noble guest licked his lips and fingered his beard. The attention of every man in the company was riveted on King Herod and the slim young girl who stood before him.

Just a few minutes past the room had rung with shouts of applause for this same dancer and the king's generous promise of a rich reward for her graceful skill. Her twinkling feet and lithe, slim body had worked their charm on all the company. And the king had responded to her art with the promise, "Whatsoever thou wilt have." No wonder that the court was stirred and moved to cheers.

But that was over. Now the room was silent, tense, waiting. For the girl had asked the king to fulfill his promise by giving her the head of John, the Baptist.

King Herod had thought that the dancer would want just a pretty gem, a jeweled bauble of some sort from all his palace treasure. Now that his promise had been given she asked him to fulfill it with a murder.

He knew where the girl got the inspiration for her terrible request. He understood full well the reason behind the desire for such a dreadful gift.

For Herod had taken Herodias, wife of his brother Philip, and placed her in his palace as his queen. The king could

no wrong—so Herod told himself—and the nobles of the court agreed. But the man spoke for truth.

God's commandments were for all men—king or peasant, rich or poor. There was no difference in the matters of right and wrong. Sin was sin, be it in the palace or in the most humble home. And Herod and Herodias were guilty of adultery. So spoke John the Baptist—fearlessly, plainly, publicly.

Of course, Herod had punished John for all of that. He had had John seized and carried away from his beloved freedom to prison. He had taken away his liberty and cast him in the palace jail. But Herod had not planned to murder John as publicly as this.

King Herod was a vain and wicked man, a foolish, evil little king who held his tiny kingdom only because the Roman emperor was pleased to let him keep it. His life was little more than a foolish phase for pleasure, for he had little real power even in Judah.

And Herod was afraid of John. Because he was so untruthful, so vain, so empty himself Herod could not understand the fearless greatness of John. So, not understanding a man who spoke for God's truth no matter what the cost, Herod feared John the Baptist.

Yet while Herod was afraid his queen Herodias, a partner in his most public sin, was capable of a hatred so deep it overcame all her fear and all her scruples. This birthday celebration was her chance, her opportunity to work revenge on John. She meant to use it well.

How carefully she must have planned her daughter's dances. How skillfully Herodias must have designed her costume. How cleverly she must have coached the girl in what to say when King Herod was pleased with her.

And it was working out now just as she, Herodias, had dreamed and planned and hoped; for her revenge was close at hand.

The King might repent of his foolish promise when he understood the evil that had opened. In fear of John he might draw back from open murder. But in his vanity

and pride he must keep a promise made where all his guests could hear it. He who had so little real power must show the power he had. He could order the execution of a prisoner and the deed would be done.

So foolish pride and evil vanity worked their way with Herod. In the tight, close silence of the dining hall, under the scrutiny of the court's searching eyes, the girl stepped forward to the servant and took from him the prize for which she asked. She carried the poor severed head of John the Baptist, man of God, off to her triumphant mother.

TO THE LEADER: *Read yourself, or have read by another leaguer, the story of John's martyrdom in Matthew 14:3-11. Be sure the story is read with care, thought, and intelligence. Select only a good reader, or read the passages yourself.*

After the reading draw the whole of the topic material and the scripture into a unit with a conclusion. The following may help you phrase your own.

CONCLUSION: So John the Baptist was murdered by order of King Herod. The charms of a dancing girl, the plot of an evil woman, the weakness of a wicked man all worked together to make John's martyrdom the chief prize for an evening's entertainment.

Dramatic is an adjective we must use in every reference to John. His birth, his life and work, his death as a martyr are all marked by high drama and adventure.

John is the man who lost his head because he dared proclaim the truth in the face of evil. The holy law of God is for all men without regard to place or station. This is the real reason for John's death by the plot of Herodias. He refused to compromise the truth even at the cost of his life.

Questions for discussion

1. What is the 6th Commandment?

Answer: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

2. Can there ever be any real difference in the application of God's laws to men?

Answer: No. The differences we men may make in applying the truth of God to men

is only the result of our own sin and weakness. God only has the power to establish and apply his holy law. We men can only love, fear, obey, and worship him. Or, we can reject his grace and break ourselves upon his laws.

3. Should you always keep your promises?

Answer: Surely the story of John's murder should teach us that when we have made a promise which is foolish or sinful we should not allow our vanity to keep us from breaking that promise. This point may be of great importance with your group and you don't want to miss it. Good promises should be kept. Bad and evil promises should be faced as mistakes and corrected as soon as possible.

4. Who was guilty of John's murder—Herod, who ordered it done; Herodias, who planned the scheme; the dancing girl who made the request for her mother; or the soldier who struck off John's head?

Answer: They were all guilty. If we must decide which is worst it would probably be (1.) Herod and Herodias, for their sin of adultery had begun the affair and hate and fear and weakness had it done; (2.) The dancing girl, for her request of John's head is so strange it is unnatural; and (3.) The soldier or jailer who actually struck John's head off as he was acting under orders.

This man John

According to some Jewish traditions John the Baptist was born in either Hebron or Jutta, priestly cities in the land of Judah. From our Bible we learn that he was the son of a priest, Zaccharias, and his wife, Elizabeth. We know that Elizabeth was a cousin of Mary, the mother of Jesus.

The birth of John was foretold to Zaccharias by an angel who announced that John would speak as did Elijah. Because Zaccharias, his father, questioned the authority of the angel he was unable to speak until after John was born.

For about 30 years from his birth, approximately six months before the birth of Jesus, we know nothing of John except that he was living in the desert wilderness. This silence was broken when he suddenly appeared as a powerful preacher demanding repentance and reformation.

John's manner of dress was unusual. His diet was extraordinary. His message

was a proclamation of God's judgement and a call to repentance. John offered baptism as a sign of reformation and hope for God's forgiveness.

Many people flocked out into the wilderness to hear him. Coming from all classes and stations of life they accepted his baptism. Some of them even thought John was the coming Messiah. He was honest and prompt in denying all such claims. Instead he told the people that there was one among them even then who was indeed the Saviour.

It was while John did God's work in preaching and baptizing at the Jordan that we find the dramatic incident of Jesus' baptism.

LEADER: *Here again, as in the former instance, use the Bible reference. Read the 3rd chapter of St. Matthew to your group.*

CONCLUSION: Yes, John was a powerful preacher. His words stirred the hearts and souls of many who listened for the truth he proclaimed was too clear to be ignored.

And our Lord recognized the worth of John by coming to him. In his baptism Jesus fulfilled all the laws of righteousness. He identified the truth of John's preaching and proclamation. And it was after baptism that Jesus was identified by God the Father. Thus all was fulfilled as Jesus took upon himself the work that would lead him to the cross and the open tomb of Easter dawning.

Questions for discussion

5. Why did Jesus fulfill all the requirements for righteousness since as the Son of God sin could gain no hold in him?

Answer: Jesus did the perfect will of the Father and that will is always to the complete fulfillment of righteousness. Anything less than that would be imperfect. As our Lord is both true God and true man it would be impossible for him to fall short in any detail.

6. Does the Bible tell us exactly how John baptized Jesus?

Answer: No. The Bible says nothing as to the mode or method of baptism. In the 16th verse of the third chapter of Matthew we read that Jesus went up out of the water; but, there is no verse or reference which tells us how far he had gone down into the water.

Paul writes of baptism as a symbol of our being buried in the old life of sin and raised to a new life of faith. But Paul makes it clear this is all symbolic. There is no reference in the accounts of John's baptism of Jesus that would prescribe any one method of baptism as being the only method satisfactory to Almighty God.

7. Is it wrong then to say that baptism must be done in just one certain way?

Answer: It is not only wrong, it is foolish. All Christians who are Lutheran we know that the sacrament of baptism gives us the grace of God. To say then that we men can make that grace ineffective by any of our methods or modes is to say that we are more powerful than God. It is God who grants grace unto salvation. All we can do is accept His gift through the Holy Spirit who calls us to be Christian or reject it.

8. Should babies be baptized?

Answer: The great commission of our Lord given in Matthew 28:19-20 is a direct command for Christians to bring all nations to Him. We are to go to all nations. We are to reach all nations. We are to baptize all nations. That is certainly clear and plain from our Lord's command. It is just as clear and just as plain that nations are made up of people. And babies are people. So our Lord clearly and plainly commands that babies are to be baptized and taught and brought to Him.

Some say that no one should be baptized until he is old enough to understand God. This is silly. No one is ever old enough or wise enough to understand God. And more important than that, baptism comes as God's gift in mercy and loving grace to us as a means of salvation. Our understanding has nothing to do with it. We either are willing to accept it in love or reject it in sin. We cannot add to nor subtract from the grace and mercy of God. Therefore, babies should be baptized as surely as anyone else for God's gift of grace is as dear to a baby as it is to his parents.

The quality of the man

To get a picture of a person we must know something of his character. So with John the Baptist. To complete our picture we need to remember those qualities that he possessed.

LEADER: *Perhaps you want to let more of your leaguers participate in the program. Here is an excellent opportunity. Before the meeting begins write each*

of the following characteristics of John on slips of paper together with the Bible reference. Distribute them in plenty of time so the leaguers have a chance to find the reference and read over their verses. Keep a master list and check off each characteristic, Bible reference, and the leaguer who has it so you can avoid confusion and arguments about who has which. Such arguments can destroy much of the value of your whole program. So please be careful.

Then call on your leaguers to read their references in turn. Announce each characteristic in turn, the reference, and the reader. Be clear, be concise, demand that the leaguers also do their best.

Characteristics of John the Baptist:

Courage—Matthew 14:3-4

Obedience—Matthew 3:1-2

Appearance—Matthew 3:4

Humility—Mark 1:7

Power as a preacher—Mark 1:5

Holiness—Mark 6:20

Jesus appreciation of John—John 5:33-35

John honored by Jesus—Matthew 11:11; Luke 7:24-27.

Finale

This then gives us the man, John the Baptist, his character, his life and work and martyrdom. He lost his head because he would not fail the truth. So his faith and courage led him to a terrible death. But beyond all that John the Baptist has won a place where he will never be forgotten by the followers of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Worship service

Call to worship: Psalm 64.

Leader: Hymn 383 CSB

Scripture lessons: Isaiah 40:1-5 and Luke 1:57-80

Prayer: Your own, or choose from Collects 8-11, page 138 CSB

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn 376 CSB—"A charge to keep I have"

Presentation and discussion of topic

The offering

Sentence prayers by selected leaguers

The Apostles' Creed

Hymn 578 CSB

Friendship Circle and Benediction.



An African poet writes about the birth of Christ..
the Mexicans set a carol to Welsh music..and an
American imagines the story of the shepherds in

Christmas As Others Know It

By Edna C. Hill and the Intermediate Luther
League of Messiah Church, Williamsport, Pa.

THIS Christmas program may be presented in a simple reading. Or it may be dramatized with costuming and lighting. If you give it this way, the three younger leaguers, Alice, Margie, and Kay come to the older leaguer Margie with their questions. While they are asking, they should be spotlighted. When someone tells the story of a picture, or reads a poem, or tells a story, the spotlight should be turned on the person making the presentation.

ALICE: Margie, we're so glad you are here. We want to ask you a question. We were looking over some of our Christmas pictures. Ellen said that there are pictures that show Mary and the baby Jesus as black or Chinese, or something like that. That isn't true, is it? We are sure you would know.

MARGIE: Sit down for a while, girls, and let's talk about it. You remember what the angel said to the shepherds the night Jesus was born, don't you? "Behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people." Many times the old prophets emphasized that the coming Messiah was to be for all peoples of the world. Of course, you naturally know this—you just haven't stopped to think about it. It is only natural for the artists among the American or English people to think of Jesus as a white baby. So they have painted him that way. But a Negro in Africa could think of him as a black baby or a Chinese artist as a little yellow baby. Don't you see? And so, as all the artists and poets and song writers of the whole world have used their arts to tell about Jesus, we have had wonderful things from all these differ-

ent peoples that are different from ours but are very beautiful. Wouldn't you like to hear about some of them?

GIRLS: Yes! Oh, yes!

MARGIE: Well, first of all, we think of the story that St. Luke tells us about the angel Gabriel coming to Mary to tell her that she was to be the mother of the Messiah. Artists in many different countries of the world have painted this story. These pictures are very different though they tell the same story. I wish I could show all of them to you. But here is a very lovely one that comes to us from Spain. It's painted by the great Spanish artist, Murillo.

(The "Annunciation" by Murillo may be secured from any religious art store or a copy may be found on page 108 of The World's Great Madonnas by Maus. The picture should be placed before the audience and light put on it so the leaguer giving the study may refer to it.)

Bartolome Murillo was, without question, the greatest painter of religious subjects of the 17th century. His parents died when he was only 11 years old. But the marked artistic talents that he possessed were carefully developed by an artist uncle.

Murillo's early years were a constant struggle. But when yet a young man he was given a commission to do 11 paintings for a small cloister for an order of friars. These paintings established his reputation. From that time he became steadily more and more famous.

He painted many famous religious pictures. But his favorite subject was the Madonna.

This painting of "The Annunciation" is one of his finest works. The Virgin Mary is pictured as a beautiful Spanish girl. She is kneeling at a prayer desk and her basket of snowy clothes stands before her. At her left hand is a spray of white lilies which are an old symbol of the Virgin. The Angel Gabriel kneels before her as he speaks his wonderful message to her: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

Gabriel's right hand is extended to Mary and his left hand points up to the dove that is hovering over her—the symbol of God's Spirit that is working this plan through her.

The cherubs gathered in the upper part of the paintings are judged the most beautiful ever put on canvas. Spain has, indeed, through the artist Murillo given to the world one of the most beautiful interpretations of the annunciation.

MARY: That is beautiful, but the Mother and baby are white, like us.

MARGIE: Yes, but she is very like the young women of Seville, Spain. Now listen to a poem about Jesus' coming that was written by an African. Listen to some of the things said in it that are strange to us but perfectly familiar to those people in Africa.

(*This poem from The World's Great Madonnas is to be read by a leaguer.*)

"Nativity"

Within a native hut, ere stirred the dawn
Unto the Pure One was an Infant born.
Wrapped in blue lappah that His mother dyed,
Laid on His father's home-tanned deerskin
hide,

The Babe still slept, by all things glorified.
Spirits of black bards burst their bonds and
sang

"Peace upon earth," until the heavens rang.
All the black babies who from earth had fled
Peeped through the clouds and gathered round
His head.

Telling of things a baby needs to do,
When first he opens his eyes on wonders new.
Telling Him that to sleep was sweetest rest,
All comfort came from His black mother's
breast.

Their gift was Love, caught from the springing
sod,
Whilst tears and laughter were the gifts of
God.

Then all the Wise Men of the past stood forth
Filling the air, East, West, South and North
And told Him of the joy that wisdom brings
To mortals in their earthly wonderings.

The children of the past shook down eads
bough,
Wreathed frangipani blossoms for His brow
They put pink lilies in His mother's hand,
And heaped for both the first fruits of the land.
His father cut some palm fronds, that the Babe
Be coaxed to zephyrs while He rested there.
Birds trilled their hallelujahs; falling dew
Trembled with laughter, till the Babe laughed
too.

All the black women brought their love;
wise,
And kissed their motherhood into His mother's
eyes.

AQUAH LALUA

MARGIE: Here is a song that we all sing at
Christmas. We understand all of it. But do
you know that this came to us from Ireland?
It was written by an Irish woman.

(*"Once in Royal David's City," No. 53, in the Common Service Book. This carol may be sung by the league or by a picked group as a choir.*)

KAY: Oh, I love that song and I'm glad to know about it.

MARY: Tell us some more, Margie!

MARGIE: Here is another of our favorite Christmas songs but I wonder whether you know that it came to us from France.

(*"Angels We Have Heard on High" p. 10 of The World's Great Madonnas or in many collections of Christmas music. It may be sung by all, or by a choral group.*)

MARGIE: I think that most of us could sing the Christmas story as Luke tells it to us in the Bible and we all love it dearly. Very many of the fine writers of the world have taken parts of it and written them into more complete stories that make them very real to us. The great American author, Lew Wallace, has done this in his famous book, *Ben Hur*. In one of the chapters of that book he tells the story of the shepherds on the night of Jesus' birth. Would you like to hear part of that?

GIRLS: Yes! Oh, yes! We sure would!

(*"The Shepherd's Story" p. 79 of Christ the Fine Arts should be told by a leaguer.*)

"The Shepherd's Story"

"Bring hither that sheepskin, Joseph, and lay it down on this bank of dry earth, under the shelving rock. The wind blows chilly from

the west but this rock will shelter us. At midnight your father, Reuben, and your uncle James will take our places; for the first watch the old man and the boy will tend the sheep."

"Yes, grandfather, you sit in this snug corner and lean back and I will lie at your feet. Now and then I will run and see whether the sheep are wandering and that will warm me, if I grow cold."

"Have you never been out on the hills at night with your father?"

"Never, grandfather. I have often begged him to let me come; but he kept saying that I must wait until I was twelve years old. On the last full moon was my birthday, and to-day, when he returned from Bethlehem to the flock, he brought me with him."

"So this is the lad's first night with the sheep in the fields, and the old man's last night, I fear," said the aged shepherd, sadly. "It is not often in these days that I venture out to keep the watches of the flock; but this one night of the year I have spent upon these hills these many years, and I always shall as long as I have strength to walk so far."

"Was your father, too, a shepherd?"

"Yes, and all his fathers before him for many generations. On these hills my ancestors have kept their sheep for I know not how long . . ."

"Do you know, my boy, that this is the night of the year on which the Lord Christ was born?"

"Oh, yes," answered the lad. "My father told me as we were walking hither today, but I had forgotten it. And you were with the sheep that night?"

"Aye."

"Where was it?"

"Here, on this very spot."

The boy's eyes began to fill with wonder as he hurriedly plied the aged man with his eager questions.

"How long ago was that, grandfather?"

"Just fifty years ago this night."

"And how old were you then?"

"Fourteen, and a stout boy for my age. I had been for two years in the fields, with my father, and had tasted to the full the hardships and dangers of the shepherd's life."

"Who were with you that night?"

"My father and his brother James, and Hosea, a neighbor and kinsman of ours. We had driven our flock from Bethlehem and were dwelling by night in the shelter of a tower on that hillside yonder. We watched by two's and changed watch at midnight. But that night we were sitting all together. The others were asking my father questions, for

he was older than they and all the people of Bethlehem revered him as a wise and devout man."

"Suddenly I saw my father rise to his feet. Then the other men sprang up. It had grown light all at once. As I turned my face in the direction in which the others were looking I saw, standing there upon that level place, a figure majestic and beautiful beyond the power of words to describe."

"Were you not afraid, grandfather?"

"Indeed I was, my boy. My heart stopped beating. The others were standing but I had no power to rise. I lay there motionless upon the earth with my eyes fixed upon that wonderful face and those clear, shining eyes."

"Did you know that it was an angel?"

"I knew not anything. I only knew what I saw was glorious, too glorious for mortal eyes to look upon. Then a look of great sweetness came into his face and in a voice clear and sweeter than any lute he said:

"Be not afraid, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For there is born to you this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Messiah, the King. And this is the sign unto you. Ye shall find a Babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.' Oh, that voice, my boy! It was wonderful beyond telling. Then, in tones louder than he had previously used he sang a great song: 'Glory to God in the highest!' As this great strain went forth he paused and it echoed and re-echoed among these hills and then we knew that other voices were joining it. These grew closer and closer until the whole air was filled with this wonderful song."

"Did you see the choir of angels overhead, grandfather?"

"Nay, I saw nothing. The brightness was too dazzling for mortal eyes. We all stood with downcast eyes, listening spellbound to the wonderful melody, until the chorus ceased, the glory faded and there was only the stars again and the sound of a lamb crying for its mother."

"The first to break the silence was my father. 'Come,' he said in a solemn voice. 'Let us go at once to Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.'

"So the sheep were quietly gathered into the fold at the tower and we hastened to Bethlehem. We had only the sign of the angel by which we should know the infant Messiah. He was to be wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger."

"Let us go to the inn," said my father, "It

stands on the very spot where King David was born. Peradventure we shall find Him there."

"A lantern hanging over the entrance to the crowded court guided us there. Two aged women near the entrance were talking in a low voice."

"Peace be unto you!" said my father.

"The Lord be gracious unto thee," answered the eldest woman, "but there is scanty cheer in this place for late comers."

"We seek not lodging," said my father, "but know you whether among the guests is an infant born this day?"

"Verily there is," answered the aged dame, "A man child more beautiful than any my eyes have ever beheld. He is lying in a manger there in the cave that serves for the stable."

"We hastened to the mouth of the cave; and there beheld our King. There was a strong man leaning on his staff above the manger. A beautiful young mother lay close beside it. Into the manger a little straw had been thrown and on it the infant lay."

There was a moment of silence after we entered the cave. My father broke it with his salutation, "Hail, thou blessed among women!" he cried. "This child of thine is a Prince and a Saviour."

And then we all bowed low upon our faces before Him and worshiped Him with praise and gladness.

Then my father told them all the things that we had heard and seen and how we had come quickly to Bethlehem and had found the things as the angel had told us. "And it is even," he cried, "as the prophet himself hath spoken: 'Thou, Bethlehem though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel, whose going forth hath been of old, even from everlasting.'"

And all that heard were full of astonishment—all save the mother. I saw no wonder on her face; the great things that my father told caused her no astonishment; she listened with a quiet and solemn joy, like one who was saying in her heart, "I knew it all before."

When my father had finished speaking, we all bowed low again before the young child; and the mother lifted Him in her arms and placed His cheek against her own, smiling graciously on us, but uttering no word. And we came forth from the stable and stood again beneath the stars in the courtyard of the inn.

In the early morning we came back again to our pastures and our flock, rejoicing to stand again in the place where the glory of God had shone and the music of heaven had filled the air.

ALICE: Honestly, I just felt as though I was there!

MARGIE: Now I want you to see one of the very wonderful paintings of the Nativity that came to us from England.

("The Nativity" by Margaret Tarrant may be secured at any religious art store. A copy is found on p. 294 of *The World's Great Masterpieces*. Study of the picture by a leaguer.)

Margaret Tarrant, the English artist of our own day, has given us this magnificent picture of the Nativity. It is one of the most beautiful and meaningful of all of our Christmas pictures.

In the center panel the exquisite Madonna sits by the crude manger bed where her beautiful baby is resting. They are surrounded by four angels, three standing with opened wings and one kneeling with wings folded. At the left one of the shepherds has already presented his offering of snow-white lambs and is kneeling in reverent worship. At the top of the panel glows the Star of Bethlehem and on the cross beam above the manger is inscribed the words from Luke; "The Dayspring has visited us." In the panel at the left are the approaching shepherds; accompanied by the angels, and on the right is a group of children representing the children of the world coming to the new-born babe.

Notice that the tiny girl in the Red-Riding Hood cape is bringing her kitten as a gift to the baby. Angels and shepherds and children all seem to be vocal with the much-loved Christmas carol: "Joy to the world." The colors of the painting are unspeakably beautiful. Margaret Tarrant has done much through this work to give to the world a deeper feeling of the wonder of this greatest of events.

KAY: Oh, that is beautiful!

MARGIE: While we are looking at this lovely picture, let us hear one of our Christmas songs that we like especially well. It came to us from Germany.

(Solo or group sing: "Away in a Manger" No. 530 Common Service Book.)

MARGIE: That is a sweet and lovely Christmas song, isn't it, girls? And we all love it. But there have been many, many different kinds of songs about Christmas given to us by different countries. I would like you to hear a very fine one that comes to us from Russia.

"Glorious Yuletide"

(Tune: Russian Hymn, No. 497 in *Common Service Book*.)

Glorious Yuletide, glad bells proclaim it,

Children all ye people, join in our gladness

Come all ye people, join in our gladness,

Loud ring our praises in sacred song.

ward to Bethlehem, follow the shepherds,
Gather around the lowly manger and stall,
in with angels, welcome the Saviour,
Born in the flesh to be Lord of all.

ward to Bethlehem, follow the wise men,
Come from afar their gifts and homage to
bring,
weeter than incense, prized more than jewels,
Hearts true and loyal unto the King!

MARGIE: Don't you like that? Now let's look
another of our great paintings. It is "The
Epiphany", the showing forth or announcing
of Jesus' coming to all the world. The Bible
story tells us about the three wise men who
came from the East with their gifts. This pic-
ture was painted by an Australian artist and
he does it in a way that makes it very real
to the Eskimos in Alaska.

("The Epiphany in the Snow" by Violet
Teague. A copy of this picture is found on
p. 583 of The World's Great Madonnas. Study
of the picture by a leaguer.)

The artist, Miss Violet Teague, while native
of Australia has painted a deeply significant
interpretation of the Epiphany in terms of the
life, customs and thought forms of the Eski-
mos of Alaska. This Madonna is distinctly dif-
ferent from our accustomed mind pictures.
Both the Mother and the baby are clothed in
costly ermine.

At the right of the picture are pictured rep-
resentatives of the great of all the world come
to worship this Baby, even as the Wise Men
of the story of the Bible. At the edge of the
picture stands a tall Nascopee-Cree Indian with
his gift of a live otter in his arms. Kneeling
below him is a white man from the Hudson
Bay Company with his offering of snow-white
fox pelts. Just behind him stands a Royal
Canadian Mounted Police offering the protec-
tion of the law. Nearby two sledge dogs, the
black one lying down and the white one sit-
ting on his haunches, are harnessed ready for
service. On the other side of the picture kneels
an Eskimo Indian presenting his gift—two
walrus tusks. And behind him a Baffin Land
Eskimo woman, her baby's head peeking out
from the top of his mother's hood, brings her gift
of love to this Madonna of the far north.

Two large moose take the place of the sheep,
horses and donkeys we are accustomed to see
in the pictures of the Epiphany. The beautiful
star glows directly above the baby's head.

This painting startles us because it is so
different. But as we study it we find it very
beautiful and begin to realize how much more
meaning it must have for our Christian broth-
ers and sisters in Eskimo Alaska.

ALICE: Now, that is the kind of a picture
we wanted to ask about, Margie. We never
knew that there were any pictures like that.
But now—well!—you know! I think that is
pretty wonderful.

MARGIE: That last song from Russia was
very serious and this picture that we have
just seen is beautiful. Wouldn't you like to
hear a very happy, lilting Christmas song that
the tune came from Wales long, long ago. The
words are from Mexico?

"Días de Navidad"

(Tune: "Deck the Hall with Boughs of
Holly")

Navidad, Navidad!

(Christmas! Christmas!)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Todoel mundo canta, canta.

(Everyone sings, sings.)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Queale gria, queale gria!

(What joy! What joy!)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Todoel mundo canta, canta.

(Everyone sing, sings.)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Es el tiempo dealegria.

(It is the time of joy.)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Todoel mundoesta contento

(Everyone is happy.)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Queale gria, queale gria!

(What joy! What joy!)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

Todoel mundoesta contento.

(Everyone is happy.)

Tra la la la la la la la la!

KAY: Oh, I like that!

MARGIE: Now, girls, do you see how much
richer it makes this beautiful old story seem
to have all parts of the world help to tell
it in their own way? It makes us feel that we
ought to try all the time to make the Christ-
mas story live every day in our lives.

MARY: Thank you so much, Margie. This
has been wonderful but we really must go
now.

MARGIE: I'm glad I was able to tell you
these things, but before you go, let's all sing
together "Silent Night." This hymn came to
us from Germany but now it is sung in every
country where there are any Christians at all
and it is loved more than any other Christmas
song.

All sing: "Silent Night"
Prayer and Benediction.



Quiet Please

A service of rededication

By Dorothy Weick

USE this special service for the presentation of Luther League membership cards for the year 1955. You will find it especially fitting on the last Sunday of the year.

Suggestions

Worship Center: A large lighted candle and an open Bible. A large copy of the Luther League emblem could be used on the wall back of the worship center.

Several signs of various sizes with the words, "QUIET PLEASE!" should be placed around the room.

Four Large Candles: For the officers.

Small Candles: One for each Luther leaguer.

Membership Cards: One for each leaguer. (These may be obtained from the Luther League of America, Room 825, 1228 Spruce St., Philadelphia 7, Pa. They are free of charge.)

PRELUDE

HYMN: "O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee." (All stanzas).

PRESIDENT: I received this letter this week and although it was addressed to me, I thought that you might find it interesting. I did.

"Dear Friend,

"This last summer, I was present for a worship service at a music camp. I would like to share the experience with you. It was a beautiful setting for out-of-doors worship and the music of the brass choir added much to the atmosphere of worship.

"As the music filled the air, campers

and guests came to the service. It was disappointing to see how few came to worship, for there was talk and confusion everywhere. The chords of the brass choir were lost in a sea of noise.

"Then I noticed an electric sign at the side of the stage. The lines on the sign read, 'Quiet, Please; Stand By; Recording; On the Air.' The words 'Quiet Please' were lighted. It seemed strange to me that such a sign should be needed for a worship service. Nevertheless, there it was—burning unheeded.

"As minutes passed, the noise and confusion increased and I saw the sign flash off and on several times as though frantically calling to the people 'QUIET, PLEASE!' As the service started the audience was quieter, but some still continued to talk and laugh through the inspiring service.

"As I watched that sign flashing again and again, I was reminded of a sign that I have seen flashing in the lives of people since the beginning of man. Some have heeded it. Others have not listened, but have gone on their noisy way.

"I have *quietly* said, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' I have said it *firmly*, 'Be still, and know that I am God.' Today, I'd like to *shout* it!

"My dear Christian, won't you stop and listen to me? No, you can't hear me unless you do listen. You can't hear me above the roar of the hot rod, the thunder of war, and the noise of sin and immorality unless you *do* listen. I beg of you. Be still and know that I am God!

"You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. No, you're not weak if you listen. In fact, you have to be strong to listen to me. Any weakling can pile up a hot rod or say 'yes' to sin, when he should have said 'no.' It takes a brave Christian to listen to my words and to serve.

"If you want a life filled with love, happiness and security, I can give it to you. It's yours for the asking. I will tell you the way but you *must* listen. Quiet, please! Quiet, please!

With divine love,
Your Friend."

(President bows head. One verse of "Oh, Master, Let Me walk With Thee" is played softly.)

PRESIDENT: Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, we come now with the prayer that we may listen and hear your voice. Thank you for the many blessings that you have already given to us. In this service of re-dedication, may we know our responsibilities as Christians and accept them.

Guide us that we may carry through our Luther League program, upholding its high principles at all times.

Forgive our weaknesses, dear Father, and help us to be strong that we may know the joy that comes only to a Christian. These things we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

HYMN: "O Christians! Leagued Together" (All stanzas).

(Lights are lowered. Four officers stand in front, facing altar. Each holds a candle.)

VICE PRESIDENT *(steps forward and lights candle from altar candle and speaks)*: I now light the candle whose name is Service Of the Church. With this light comes the vision of what it means to be a child of God. Through this light I can see the love and service that God has given and continues to give me.

SECRETARY *(steps forward and lights candle from altar candle and speaks)*: I now light the candle named Service By the Church. Its glow lights the realization in my mind of what it means to be a member of the church. It tells me of the many kinds of service that the church is giving to me through the worship service, Sunday school, and youth program.

TREASURER *(steps forward and lights candle from altar and speaks)*: I now light a third candle called service For the Church. Its flame clearly burns with the responsibility that follows these first two candles. It is impossible to escape the flame of this third candle when I know the service that God and the church has shown to me. As I look at this flame, I know that I too must serve.

(The three with lighted candles turn to the President and together light his candle. Then blow out their own candles and again face the altar.)

PRESIDENT: Now I hold a very special light: The three-in-one-Service of the Church, by the Church and for the Church. Its light carries a three-fold responsibility. Its flame seems to flash "Quiet Please!" It is the Luther League flame. *(President turns toward audience.)* I offer the Luther League flame to you. If you accept it, you will find privileges and responsibilities. You will see a sign, "Quiet Please!" You will listen and then you will serve. Will you accept the Luther League flame?

(Soft music continues while leaguers form lines in front of president.)

(Secretary stands on right side of president with membership cards. Treasurer stands on left side of president with box of small candles. Vice President starts the line by getting small candle, lighting it from president's candle. He receives membership card and then leads group to form a circle around the room. After all the leaguers have lighted their candles, the secretary and treasurer light theirs and with the president complete the circle.)

PRESIDENT: Let us pray.

Dear Heavenly Father, as we dedicate ourselves to the Luther League flame, we pray that we may increase its brightness; that it may shine brighter in our own lives and in the lives of others.

We pray that its flame will help us to see the flashing of the sign, "Quiet please." and that we will be brave and listen to your words.

We pray that we may know at all times that you are God and that you are always with us. Thank you, Father, for loving us and caring for us. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

(Circle remains while one verse of "Oh, Master," is played softly. President then leads leaguers out of the room.)

The hymns used in this service are found in *The Christian Youth Hymnal*. . . Careful planning will be necessary to insure the success of this service. Check and double-check to be sure that you have the needed properties. They are few, but important.

Expressive reading will be important, especially in the president's part. So be sure that the officers read their speeches aloud several times before the service.

This re-dedication service can serve as a vitamin for your Luther league. Be sure all of your leaguers get a "dose."

"Quiet, please" are you listening?

Order your

1955 MEMBERSHIP CARDS

for your Luther League now. These sturdy, wallet-size cards have space for the member's name and church—and a line for signature of your local league president. Available free in quantity.

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